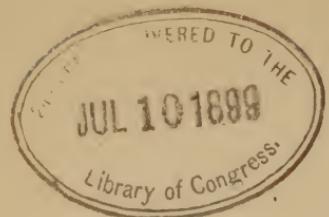


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S.M.SAYFORD

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.





# PERSONAL WORK

BY  
S. M. SAYFORD.

We must work the works of Him that sent me,  
while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can  
work. John ix. 4.

Run, speak to this young man. Zech. ii. 4.



NEW YORK:  
THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF  
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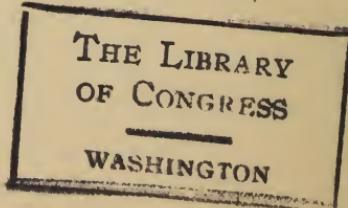
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TO  
EDWARD R. GRAVES,  
OF LOCKPORT, N.Y.  
(FOR MANY YEARS A COMMERCIAL TRAVELER),  
WHOSE PERSISTENT AND TACTFUL  
PERSONAL EFFORTS  
BROUGHT THE AUTHOR TO JESUS  
AND INTO WORK FOR THE EXTENSION OF  
CHRIST'S KINGDOM,  
THIS VOLUME IS GRATEFULLY  
INSCRIBED.



## PREFACE.

A NUMBER of my fellow-workers have been urging me to present in some permanent form, especially for the Christian students in our institutions of learning, results of my experience in the study and practice of personal work. Whether my compliance with the request of these friends will supply a need, or even present new thoughts, in connection with this important part of Christian activity, can only be determined when the following pages have gone upon their mission.

I am under special obligations to the International Committee of Young Men's Christian Associations for the liberty to quote from or use its valuable pamphlets on this subject, and I take the liberty to arrange desirable texts of Scripture after the method used by Mr. Dyson Hague in "Ways to Win."

My *hope* is that this book may prove a help to young people who desire to bring men to Jesus. My *ambition* is to write it in such a way that the perusal of its pages may incite the reader to more earnest religious effort. My *prayer* is that the Master, in whose name it is written, will approve it, and that, therefore, it may help extend His kingdom among men.

SAMUEL M. SAYFORD.

NEWTON, MASS., May, 1899.



## CONTENTS.

	PAGE
I. PERSONAL WORK, . . . . .	9
II. THE PERSONAL WORKER, . . . . .	21
III. SPIRITUAL EQUIPMENT, . . . . .	31
IV. TRAINING, . . . . .	45
V. METHODS, . . . . .	57
VI. ILLUSTRATIONS FROM SCRIPTURE, . . .	71
VII. ILLUSTRATIONS FROM LIFE, . . . . .	83
VIII. OPPORTUNITIES, . . . . .	109
APPENDIX I, USEFUL SCRIPTURE TEXTS, . . .	121
APPENDIX II, THE WORKER'S LIBRARY, . . .	129



## PERSONAL WORK.

“John . . . saith, Behold the Lamb of God! And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.”

“Andrew findeth first his own brother Simon, . . . He brought him unto Jesus.”

“Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found Him, of whom Moses in the law, and in the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.”

Look up the following references and read them prayerfully.

- |                   |                  |
|-------------------|------------------|
| Matt. xx. 1-16.   | Mark v. 19, 20.  |
| Mark ix. 17.      | Mark xiii. 34.   |
| Mark xvi. 15.     | Luke v. 10.      |
| Luke vii. 11-14.  | Luke x. 30-37.   |
| John i. 29-51.    | John v. 6-9.     |
| John ix. 4.       | Acts iii. 1-8.   |
| Acts viii. 26-31. | Acts xvi. 25-31. |
| I. Cor. xv. 58.   | Col. i. 28, 29.  |
| James v. 19, 20.  | Rev. xxii. 17.   |

## I.—PERSONAL WORK.

He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah (which is being interpreted, Christ). He brought him unto Jesus. John i. 41.

Personal work has the authority of the Scriptures and the example of Jesus and His disciples.

The spirit of the Gospel is the spirit of activity. Idleness is deprecated; earnestness and zeal are commended. He who “came not to be ministered unto, but to minister,” “went about doing good.” It was He who said on one occasion to His disciples, “We must work the works of Him that sent Me while it is day: the night cometh when no man can work.”

Personal work is the woof and warp of Christian activity; therefore this important element of service has the largest place in the extension of Christ’s kingdom, and every disciple of Jesus Christ is under obligation to engage in it. It does not necessarily involve the *conversion* of the person approached, but the attempt to win him, which is the ultimate object always in the mind of the worker. The work itself consists in directing the attention of men to Him, and, with discretion, urging them to accept the

invitations of the Gospel, and order their lives by its teaching.

John said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" and again he said, "Behold the Lamb of God!" And the two disciples [of John] heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.

Personal work then, as applied to individual effort in extending the kingdom of Christ, is the directing of the attention of one individual, by another individual, to Jesus of Nazareth as the Lamb of God, the Saviour of sinners.

Dr. H. Clay Trumbull says, in the February number of *The Intercollegian*: "On one occasion I heard testimony given of a student who was thus habitually faithful to his Master and to his fellow students which well illustrates the possibility and the value of such a habit of life. A number of clergymen in a New England city were criticising the methods of a well-known evangelist. One of the number, who was rector of the principal Episcopal church in the city, said to the others, earnestly: 'You will understand that the public methods of this man's work are not such as I should incline to; but I want to bear witness to his fidelity to his Master in all his life course. I was his fellow-student in college. I knew him well there. And this I can say of him: in all the four years of his college course, no student could be six weeks there without having to meet squarely the question of his personal

relation to Christ, through the loving and earnest personal appeal of that follower of Christ. I know more than one who was thus influenced by him. In my own case, I was a skeptic when I entered college, yet I had little thought on the subject of religion anyway. But that man's appeals I had to meet, and I would not resist. It is in consequence of his faithfulness that my life is in the Christian ministry. And now, whatever I think of that man's peculiar methods of public Christian work, I cannot but be grateful for his personal fidelity to his Master and ours.' That was having personal work for souls a habit of life. What if there were only ten such Christian men as that student in every college class? What if there were even one? Why should there not be more?"

Individual effort differs from the comprehensive work of the ministry in that it has to do with the one man, rather than with an audience of many. It finds the one man, and, finding him, presses upon his attention the love of God in the gift of Jesus Christ, and the claim He has on every one who hears of Him. Comparatively few men are called into the regular ministry, but all who put their trust in the Lord Jesus, and promise to follow Him, are called into service. "To each one his work." Every man is to a degree responsible for the spiritual life and condition of some other man. We are interdependent beings. That which affects the one affects the many. If I have received "the free gift of God,"

which "is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord"; if I have become a partaker of the divine nature; if I have a well-grounded hope for the future,—it is my duty to share the "glad tidings" with my brother man. There is nothing in which this old world needs to have so great an interest as in the story of Him who came "to give His life a ransom for many"; and He bids us preach this Gospel to every creature. Philip may not have been able to preach eloquently, nor to have explained much about the Messiah, but he could *find* Nathaniel, and say unto him: "We have found Him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. . . . Come and see."

These considerations lead to the first general proposition which I wish to emphasize; namely, *that every Christian is under obligation to do personal work.*

The fact of our being saved, almost always, through some human instrumentality, makes it incumbent upon us to help save some one else. It is a debt which we owe to humanity. But we are under a higher obligation to do this work, for the reason that it pleased God, when here in the flesh, to call men rather than angels into His service. When we think of our inertness and sinfulness, we may well wonder why the Lord Jesus did not commission an angelic ministry for this exalted service. We may well marvel that he said to mere men, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men"; that he said to

a man, "From henceforth thou shalt catch men"; that he said to Saul of Tarsus, "For to this end I have appeared unto thee, to appoint thee a minister and a witness, both of the things wherein thou hast seen Me, and of the things wherein I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom I send thee, to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive remission of sins, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith in Me." What a glorious privilege! What marvelous possibilities are put within the reach of a man! Jesus stated distinctly that His disciples were to be His witnesses; that they were to preach the Gospel to every creature, to testify for Him in all parts of the world; and that He would be with them always, even unto the end.

Another reason why a Christian is under obligation to do this work is, because everywhere in the Scriptures, as already suggested, activity is commended and idleness rebuked.

And, lastly, we are under obligation to find that other man, because, if we fail to warn him, he may be lost, and the awful responsibility may be ours. "Therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from Me. When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die, and thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but

his blood will I require at thine hand" (Ezek. xxxiii. 7, 8). Our Lord has gone to prepare a place for us, and He bids us watch; to "occupy till He come." Personal responsibility is thus laid upon the Christian; and this thought doubtless impelled Paul in writing, not only to the Christians in Corinth, but to "all that in every place call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ," to be "always abounding in the work of the Lord."

My second proposition is one which may be opposed to the theory or opinion held by many who have written or spoken on the subject, but which I hold to be perfectly demonstrable; namely, that *personal work is not difficult to do*.

This I affirm: First, because of what Jesus says in Matt. xi. 30: "For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Second, because we are ambassadors on behalf of Christ, as though God were intreating by us: . . . . "And working together with Him we intreat." And, third, because of the naturalness of approach among men through personal conversation and personal correspondence.

I do not mean that there are no difficulties connected with the prosecution of such work, that every man is equally easy of access, or that every Christian finds it equally congenial or easy to do. But I do maintain that this personal work element enters so largely into all the affairs of life; and that since all men in their business are accustomed to do more or less of it in one way or another, it is

comparatively easy for them to apply this method of work to the promulgation of the Gospel, and to acquainting others, personally, with its invitations and claims.

Observe the prominent part which personal work with others plays in business life. The merchant is obliged to employ the commercial traveler to personally solicit patronage from the men to whom he carries his samples, as he travels from town to town. His methods of approach may be profitably studied by those of us who desire to engage in the work we now have under discussion. Note, too, the vast amount of personal solicitation done through business correspondence: cards, circulars, and letters, sealed under letter-postage and personally addressed, in order to command the personal attention of those whose patronage is desired.

It is practically the same in social life. Lodges and clubs are always projected and conducted through personal effort. Receptions, banquets, and other social events are discussed for days, and often for weeks, before they occur. Social calls are made with special reference to intensifying the interest in the coming event, and no opportunity is neglected to command and keep the attention of all whose interest is desired.

Our political machinery affords another illustration of this same principle. Political parties are managed, to a great extent, through the employment of personal instrumentality. Men who control

the political machinery of an entire state do it mainly through their personal knowledge of, and contact with, individuals. The leaders keep in personal touch with "pivotal men," and these in turn come in touch with the voter. In the national election of 1896, Mr. Mark Hanna's great postal card scheme, by which the personal attention of thousands of individual voters was secured and their co-operation solicited, was a striking illustration of the value and importance of personal effort through correspondence.

In college life this same element enters into all the methods of the institution, and constitutes its life. Personal contact between instructor and pupil is most desirable, and is even necessary to the best work. Literary societies, fraternities, athletic organizations are what they are because of the vast amount of personal effort employed in their interest.

Every introduction of one individual to another, every social call, every conversation carried on between two persons, is an illustration of the naturalness and the necessity of personal effort, and proves, in part at least, the reasonableness of my second proposition.

The difficulties met with in trying to win men to Christ are due, in most instances, to the conscious or unconscious dependence of the worker on his own effort, his own argument, his own training, instead of reliance on the Holy Spirit to regenerate and unite man to God in Jesus Christ. Man is only the

instrument. Let him witness for Christ, relying on God to use his testimony, and this work which he is privileged to do becomes his delight. And under such conditions the work is not difficult to do.

Were all professing Christians conscientiously engaged in personal work the problems of the Church would be speedily solved.

In an interesting discussion on church attendance, the Rev. Howard A. Bridgman concluded an article in *The Independent* (November 3, 1898), as follows : "But the problem remains to beget an interest in the average non-church goer in the needs of the spiritual life. For this we must solicit men one by one. There is no other way. We may talk to the end of the century about methods and about the problem. But it may be time to act on the principle which governed the profound Squeers in the conduct of his school, 'when a boy knows a thing he goes and does it.' We ought to know personally some of the persons in regard to whom we theorize so much ; and if the Church of Jesus Christ means anything to us, if we get anything from its ministrations and its sacraments ; if we believe that, despite its frailties and inconsistencies, it is the divinest institution the world possesses to-day ; then let us go out after other men, not men in the lump, but one by one. Given sufficient tact and persistence, we shall find some way to induce them to come to God's house, and then to cast their lot with His people."

**WILL MY FELLOW CHRISTIAN ADDRESS TO HIMSELF THE FOLLOWING PERSONAL INQUIRY?**

Do I recognize the obligation incumbent upon me, and therefore realize the responsibility which is mine, by reason of my environment and opportunities ?

Do I admit the naturalness of personal approach through conversation and correspondence, and, therefore, recognize the comparative ease with which personal work may be done ?

Am I solicitous for the highest welfare of my fellow-men ?

Do I resolve, now, to improve at least one of the opportunities which are of constant occurrence, and by the blessing of God be alert for souls ?

# THE PERSONAL WORKER.

“ What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy living and godliness.”

“ Like the Holy One which called you is holy, be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living.”

“ Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.”

“ For we are God’s fellow-workers.”

Read the verses indicated by the following references. Spend time in the consideration of each verse ; memorize in order to retain them ; and then bring your life, by the blessing of God, into harmony with their teaching.

John iv. 35, 36.	Rom. xii. 1, 2.
John ix. 4.	II. Tim. ii. 15.
John xv. 5.	I. Cor. iii. 7, 8.
Dan. xii. 3.	II. Tim. iii. 17.
I. Tim. iv. 12, 13.	I. Thess. v. 22.
Eph. iv. 29, 30.	I. Pet. ii. 11.
	Rev. xxii. 12.

## II.—THE PERSONAL WORKER

One who would do personal religious work with any reasonable degree of success must be, first of all, a converted man,—that is, regenerated by the Holy Ghost,—and possess the qualities of the new life in Christ. He must know Him whom to know is life eternal. And he must know from the authority of God's word that he has passed from death, or out of death, into life. He must believe the Bible as the word of God ; that the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth ; that men are lost, and that Christ came to save them ; that all who accept Him become children of God, “being born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God” ; that this new life is in Christ. He must have hatred for sin, and love for righteousness.

Such is the ideal personal worker. Of course I do not say that one lacking the assurance of acceptance with God, who is not enlightened to the extent above indicated, cannot do personal work ; but rather that this assurance is essential if one would work easily and with large expectation of success.

It is necessary, furthermore, that the personal worker should have a knowledge of the Scriptures, and be a habitual student of them, because they

testify of Jesus Christ and the way of life ; because they make wise unto salvation ; and also because “the word of God is living and active, a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

He must be a praying man,—a man habitually given to prayer,—having the right to pray, because he is leading the right kind of a life. “The supplication of a righteous man availeth much in its working.” Prayer as to the form may be right, but the pray-er may be wrong. When the conditions are met, prayer becomes “the key that opens the cabinet of God, and unlocks the treasures of heaven.” Being saved, and entrusted with such tremendous interests, there is nothing He will deny us. The words of Jesus in John xiv. 13 are preëminently for a worker : “Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.”

It is as if our government were to commission one of its citizens to make extended explorations in an unknown land, or to carry out some undertaking involving a large expenditure of money, and should say to him, “Ask for what you need and it shall be supplied.” With what marvelous authority one is empowered when such a privilege is coupled with such an assurance ! The need will, of necessity, be for the furtherance of the work, and the glory of him who creates the mission.

Furthermore, prayer, in so far as it is conversation with God, is expressive of fellowship with Him ;

the result of such fellowship is an abounding love, increasing confidence, more childlike dependence, greater boldness, larger expectation, intensified desire to please Him, and a deeper yearning for the coming of the King, and the establishment of His kingdom. Matthew Henry says : "I have a friend and a neighbor who is very wealthy, very wise, and vastly agreeable. He is withal of most generous disposition, very obliging, and loves me dearly. To him I resort often : sometimes to borrow, sometimes to ask as a gift what I know he is glad to bestow ; now again for instruction or advice ; but many a time only for a rare gossip, an entertaining chat. So in all these ways, and for just such ends, do I go to God."

There can be no real spirituality without prayer. As Murray says, "It is the very essence of true religion, the channel of all blessing, the secret of power and life."

Thus far I have dwelt upon the spiritual qualities, or the religious character, of a personal worker—the spiritual characteristics of a man who has become a partaker of the divine nature, and desires to serve God in obedience to the commands of Jesus Christ. I desire now to consider his natural endowments or equipment. Much is said about "consecrated common sense," which means common sense in prosecuting the Lord's work, as well as in living the life we have through faith in Him. So far as this quality has to do with personal work, it means being tactful in approaching men.

The word most suggestive, though not in common use, of all the natural qualities so desirable in a personal worker, is *gumption*, which may be defined as a combination of capacity, shrewdness, address : capacity, in the sense of possessing knowledge and ideas that others may be blessed thereby ; shrewdness, in the sense of being sagacious, wise, having a penetrating and comprehensive mind ; address, in the sense of being pleasant in approaching men, and possessed of skill, adroitness, and dexterity. These qualities will make a man who is enlivened by the Holy Spirit preëminently successful in winning men to Christ.

In this connection I want to emphasize the importance of good personal appearance and the indispensableness of a character above reproach. A Christian man ought to be careful in his dress, bearing, and manner. Tidiness and cleanliness are traits of refinement which we have a right to expect in one who makes himself, necessarily, more or less conspicuous when he becomes active in Christian work. Moreover, good character, or the reputation of possessing it, lends a strength to utterances or statements which puts them beyond question.

“ His words are bonds ;  
His love sincere, his thoughts immaculate ;  
His heart as far from fraud as heaven from earth.”

A man lacking genuine character is not likely to desire personal work, and if he does he is in no sense fit to be entrusted with such a sacred charge.

There are many things which, in themselves, may not be sinful, but which, according to the inspired statement of Paul, are not expedient for Christian men. A personal worker who recites vulgar stories, who is given to dishonest practices in student, professional, or commercial life, who is given to worldliness, has neither power with God nor good influence over men.

A young student in a New England college, a member of the Young Men's Christian Association, saw his room-mate express a desire to be a Christian during the progress of special religious meetings in the college. At the close of the meeting he came to the leader and said, "My chum arose for prayers this evening, and I don't know what to do about it." "Do!" said the leader, "why, his public expression of desire presents a favorable opportunity for you to render him a most important service: you may lead him to decision. When in your room tonight take the old Book, and show him the way of life." "Ah," said he, "that is what I could have done had I not lost my influence with him. Ten days ago I was off on a spree with him, and we played cards for money."

The nicest care should be exercised with reference to associates, associations, habits, and conversation. A personal worker should avoid dangerous indulgences as he would avoid poison; and dangerous companionships as he would a leper; and dangerous places of resort as he would a pest house.

*He should have faith:* “Without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto Him; for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that seek after Him.”

*He should have humility:* “And the Lord’s servant must not strive, but be gentle towards all, apt to teach, forbearing, in meekness instructing them that oppose themselves.”

*He should have personal purity:* “But flee youthful lusts, and follow after righteousness, faith, love, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.”

*He must have patience:* “But if we hope for that which we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.”

*He must have love:* “And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.”

*He must be prayerful and watchful:* “With all prayer and supplication praying at all seasons in the Spirit, and watching thereunto in all perseverance and supplication for all the saints.”

#### PERSONAL INQUIRY.

Let the following questions find an honest answer from the heart. The searching will do good.

Am I a child of God through personal acceptance of Jesus Christ?

Am I honestly striving to obey Him, and do I desire to serve Him?

Have I a regularly appointed time, *every day*, for secret prayer?

“ Yet never sleep the sun up ; prayer should  
Dawn with the day ; there are set awful hours  
'Twixt heaven and us ; the manna was not good  
After sun-rising ; far day sullies flowers ;  
Rise to prevent the sun ; sleep doth sin glut,  
And heaven's gate opens when the world's is shut.”

Am I studying the Scriptures with a view to acquire better equipment for life and service?

Do I love righteousness, and hate sin?

Have I discontinued the practice of every known sin?



## SPIRITUAL EQUIPMENT.

“And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them.”

“Your body is a temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have from God.”

“If ye love me; ye will keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that He may be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth.”

“And my speech and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.”

“I can do all things in Him that strengtheneth me.”

The following references will direct the reader to helpful texts, every one of which ought to be read carefully in connection with the perusal of this chapter.

- |                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Luke ii. 25, 26.      | Acts ix. 17.          |
| Luke iii. 22.         | Rom. v. 5.            |
| Luke iv. 18.          | Rom. viii. 9, 10, 14. |
| Luke xi. 13.          | I. Cor. ii. 4.        |
| John xiv. 15–17, 26.  | I. Cor. vi. 19.       |
| John xv. 26, 27.      | I. Cor. xii. 3–11.    |
| John xvi. 7–14.       | II. Cor. iii. 17.     |
| John xx. 22.          | II. Cor. vi. 16.      |
| Acts i. 2, 8.         | Gal. v. 16–18.        |
| Acts ii. 4, 30.       | Gal. v. 22–25.        |
| Acts viii. 15–20, 29. | Eph. iv. 30.          |
| Ex. xxxv. 30–35.      |                       |

### III.—SPIRITUAL EQUIPMENT.

The last few years have marked a decided revival of interest in the study of the person and office of the Holy Spirit. Books, pamphlets, and contributions to the religious press have multiplied, until now this doctrine is discussed with a freedom and assurance by many young converts that excites the wonder and pity of older Christians. The propriety of handling so deep a subject with such familiarity, until at least more study is given to the teachings of Christ, is justly deprecated. And yet it were better thus than not to have brought into prominence at all a subject than which there is none more important among all religious topics.

“Measured by the place it occupies in the Scriptures,” says Tophel, “the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is in the foremost rank in the evangelical faith ; for, though it is the last to be revealed—because it crowns the Biblical edifice and requires a certain moral preparation in order to be well understood), this doctrine begins to form itself in the very first chapter of Genesis ; its elements can be gathered from nearly all the books of the Old Testament, while, as to those of the New Testament, from the Gospel of John to the end of the Apocalypse, we may affirm that they are filled with it.”

It is not my purpose here to attempt an additional study of this supremely important and fascinating theme, but rather to emphasize its fundamental truth, and urge obedience to the commands of the Holy Spirit in order that His working in us may not be hindered. I desire to help establish the reader on a Biblical foundation for his conception of the Holy Spirit, and to expose the fallacy of basing one's assurance of the possession of this gracious gift of God on some ecstatic feeling or on a mere theory. I have met and conversed with many Christian young men who were greatly exercised about the power of the Holy Ghost. They had gone to Christian conventions expressly to get it. They had tried to argue themselves into its possession, only to be perplexed and confounded. They had been confident of its possession when they had talked eloquently in religious meetings, and were equally sure they failed to receive it when they lacked freedom of utterance. In Bruce's "Training of the Twelve," he says: "'Power from on high' means all that the apostles were to gain from the mission of the Comforter — enlightenment of mind, enlargement of heart, sanctification of their faculties, and transformation of their characters, so as to make them whetted swords and polished shafts for subduing the world unto the truth; these, or the effect of these combined, constituted the power for which Jesus directed the eleven to wait. The power, therefore, was a spiritual power, not a magical; an inspiration, not a possession; a power which was

not to act as a blind fanatical force, but to manifest itself as a spirit of love and of a sound mind. After the power descended the apostles were to be not less rational, but more; not mad, but sober-minded; not excited rhapsodists, but calm, clear, dignified expositors of divine truth, such as they appear in Luke's history of their ministry. In a word, they were to be less like their past selves and more like their Master; no longer ignorant, childish, weak, carnal, but initiated into the mysteries of the kingdom, and habitually under the guidance of the Spirit of grace and holiness."

This divine energy, "power from on high," is the *sine qua non*, the indispensable condition to success in all Christian work. The personal worker may possess all the qualities and qualifications, under natural endowment, considered in the preceding chapter, yet if he lacks this precious, priceless gift of God, his work, if done at all, will be done in the energy of the flesh rather than in the energy of the Spirit.

What do we mean by the Holy Spirit? What is the Holy Spirit? (I take the liberty of quoting freely from Tophel at this point). "Is the Holy Spirit, as it has been so often represented, a mere influence exercised on the mind of man by scriptural truths? Is it a disposition of the heart; and do these words, 'If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His,' only mean, 'He who is not animated by Christian sentiments is not a Christian?' Is it simply an emanation from God, an

action of God, a gift of God? To all who study attentively, and who accept the numerous passages which relate to this question, the Holy Spirit is more than all that. He is not some vague thing indeterminable and incomprehensible. As some one has well said : ‘He is not *something*, and something human, He is *some one*.’ The Holy Spirit is a Being, real, living, personal, one of the three persons of the Trinity ; a Being who, consequently, possesses all the perfections of God and all the Divine life. In His intimate union with the Son, the Holy Spirit is the unique organ by which God wills to communicate to man His own life, the supernatural life, the divine life ; that is to say, His holiness, His power, His love, and His felicity. In communicating Himself unto man, the Spirit does not separate Himself from the Father or from the Son. He remains one with them, and, moreover, He associates man to that union. The Spirit, therefore, causes Christ glorified to dwell in the heart of the believer, and through Christ God the Father. He takes that which is Christ’s, that is to say, the nature of Christ, to communicate it unto the believer ; and, as that which belongs to Christ belongs to God, and that which belongs to God belongs to Christ, it is therefore the things of God, the life of God, the nature of God, the person of God, which the Holy Spirit communicates to the child of God.” God’s precious gift to this world was Himself in the person of Jesus Christ. God’s precious gift to His Church is Himself in the person

of the Holy Spirit. The late Dr. A. J. Gordon, in his "Ministry of the Spirit," says: "The Holy Spirit, as coming down to fill the place of the ascended Redeemer, has rightly been called 'The Vicar of Jesus Christ.' To Him the entire administration of the Church has been committed until the Lord shall return in glory." The Church in her normal condition will "live and move and have her being" in a living sense of the Holy Spirit as a present force; yea, even as the present God. And this is equally applicable to the individual member of the Church. We are to have Him as our host, and as our guest, when we comply with the conditions so clearly defined in the New Testament Scriptures. "Behold I stand at the door and knock: If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may be with you for ever, even the Spirit of Truth, whom the world connot receive; for it beholdeith Him not, neither knoweth Him: Ye know Him; for *He abideth with you*, and shall be in you." "If a man love me, he will keep my word; and my Father will love him, and *we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.*" "Know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have from God?" "It is God which worketh in you both to will and to work, for His good pleasure."

Oh for the consciousness of the ever present, indwelling, inworking God! This is of paramount importance to all personal workers: *God in us! God working in us!* “You have often envied the happiness of Abraham, who received into his tent the ambassadors of Jehovah! You would have wished to enter with the high priest into the Most Holy Place, so as to behold that supernatural light which symbolized the presence of God! Like Simon, you would wish to have borne the child Jesus in your arms! It would have been precious to you to receive the Lord at your table, like the family at Bethany received Him! And how oft have you regretted that you lived in the nineteenth century, rather than in the first, in Judea, so as to have seen Jesus face to face! Well then, brother, whilst thou enviest that favor granted unto others, thou possessest one before which all others grow dim. The honor reserved to the children of the new dispensation is incomparably the greater. It is no longer, in fact, an angel, or an archangel; it is no longer the symbol of the presence of God; it is no longer the Christ, Son of man, Christ poor, Christ clothed in feeble flesh, Christ in humiliation: it is Christ exalted to glory, Christ all powerful, Christ one with the Father and the Spirit, Christ, by his glorification, become capable of uniting Himself in His very nature to our own nature; it is God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, whom thou really hast in thee, if thou has within thee the Holy Spirit.”

The two questions of supreme importance in this connection are: (1) Have I received the Holy Spirit by a simple act of faith in Jesus Christ? (2) Am I presenting the most favorable conditions for His working in me and through me?

Paul says, in writing to the Ephesians: "Wherefore I was made a minister, according to the gift of that grace of God which was given me according to the working of His power." "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father, . . . that He would grant you according to the riches of His glory, *that ye may be strengthened with power through the Spirit in the inward man.*" "Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might." Writing to the Hebrews, he says: "Now the God of peace make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in us that which is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ." To the Corinthian Christians: "There are diversities of workings, but the same God who worketh all things in all."

Whether every Christian *knows* that he is "filled with the Spirit," or "baptized with the Spirit," or has the "enduement of power," is, in my judgment, not so important as whether he has the consciousness of being "indwelt of the Spirit," having God the Holy Spirit in him. My friend, Dr. Scofield, writing me on this subject, says: "When you take the position that a believer in Jesus Christ has the Holy Spirit, you are on impregnable ground. Faith has two classes of things to deal with, things which

are true and need but to be actualized in experience, and things which may be true when grasped by faith. The mistake of many modern teachers on the Holy Spirit is in putting the Spirit into the last category. Ring out the truth that believers already have the Holy Spirit, and every conscious moment of their lives are either giving Him His rightful sway or else are grieving and quenching Him, and you will touch the conscience of the Church at a new point."

To say that God the Holy Spirit is in the believer is to be in accord with the teaching of Scripture on this subject. God says, by the prophet Ezekiel : "And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them." And by his servant Paul, He says : "But if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His." "Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" To be filled with the Spirit means, whatever else it may mean, to let God have complete possession of my heart ; to give Him the right of way in my life ; to "put off the old man with his doings" ; to obey His commandments. The pewter cup at the spring can only be filled with the sparkling water when the pebbles, left in it by the child who played with it, are taken out.

In the introduction to McNeal's "Spirit-Filled Life" — a book I wish every Christian would read — Andrew Murray says : "It is known that all do not

perfectly agree as to the best answer to the question, How to be filled with the Spirit? Some press that aspect of truth which reminds us that the Holy Spirit *has been given* to the Church, and that He dwells in every believer, a fountain of living water. As there have been fountains clogged by stones and earth, and only needed to be cleared and opened up, so we have only to remove the hindrances, to yield ourselves in perfect surrender to the Spirit in us, and the filling will come. We must not ask God for more of the Spirit. God asks for more of us that the Spirit may have us wholly."

"Others, while admitting fully that the Spirit is in the believer, and that He asks for a more entire surrender, yet urge that it is from God direct that the filling of the Spirit must ever still be asked and received. God cannot give His spiritual gifts apart from Himself once for all. As the divine and everlasting One, He gives unceasingly. The Spirit is not given as if He had left heaven. He is in God and in the Church. It is from God Himself that larger measures of the Spirit must ever be sought and received."

"Among those who hold this latter view, there is again somewhat of a diversity in the representation of truth. On the one hand we are reminded that it is "by faith" we receive the Holy Spirit, and that faith often has to rest and to act without any conscious experience—has to walk in the dark. Souls that are fully surrendered to God are invited to

claim the promise and then to go and work in the full assurance that the Spirit is in them, and will in His fullness work through them. On the other hand, stress is laid on the words, "we receive the Spirit" by faith. The difference between believing and receiving is pointed out, and we are urged to wait until we receive what we claim, and know that God has anew filled us with the Spirit. "To be filled with the Spirit" is offered us as a definite, conscious experience."

"With still other Christians there is to be found what may be regarded as a combination of these different views. They believe that a very definite, conscious filling of the Spirit has been received by some, and may be had by all. Though from their own experience they cannot testify of it, they still look for God to do for them above what they have asked or thought. Meantime they know that God's Spirit is in them, and seek grace to know Him better, and to yield themselves to Him more undividedly. They believe that the Spirit within them is Himself leading them on to the Lord above them, whose it is to fill with the Spirit. They have claimed in faith the fullness ; they have placed themselves to be filled ; they look to their Lord to fulfill His promises. Whether it comes in one swift moment or more gradually, they know it is theirs."

I have quoted these words of Mr. Meyer to show what a variety of views there are on this subject. The studying of so many different theories has a

tendency to confuse the average Christian, and I have therefore aimed to hold to the simplest teaching of the Scriptures concerning God's working in us. The phase of truth I desire to impress upon the attention of the personal worker is, that if we have in us, and are obedient to, the indwelling Spirit, we may bear His fruit, and depend upon Him for all necessary power to overcome sin, and for any service to which we are called. Let me not be understood as questioning the need of being "filled with the Spirit." I simply do not regard it as necessary to put such strong emphasis on the *knowledge* of being filled.

When God was here in the flesh, He was *with* His disciples. Now He is *in* His disciples, and will clothe them with all needed power, as the demand is made and the conditions are met. God's working in us is the operation about which we need to be concerned. We need to see that the freedom of the heart is fully granted unto Him, that we keep in loving, affectionate fellowship with Him, that we just let Him fill us as he sees the need. Rev. John MacNeil's illustration is a good one. He says: "In driving between Melbourne and my home I often stop at a wayside trough to give the horse a drink. I notice that the trough is quite full of water, and that there is a box in one end of it. As the horse drinks, the water is lowering, and presently I hear a sound as of a running tap. Yes, the sound is coming from the box. Within it there is a tap

connected by pipes with the Yan Yean Reservoir up in the Plenty Ranges. Attached by a lever to the tap is a metal ball, which rests on the surface of the water. As the horse drinks, the water on which the ball is floating is lowered, and thus the ball is lowered ; the lowering of the ball opens the tap and the Yan Yean begins to pour in, the trough is ‘being filled,’ so that it is always ‘full.’” The filling is according to the demand. “The Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey Him,” “shall supply all our need according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.”

## TRAINING.

“ Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of God.”

“ Surely Thou hast some work for me to do,  
    Oh! open Thou mine eyes  
To see how Thou wouldest have it done,  
    And where it lies ! ”

- |                  |                      |
|------------------|----------------------|
| John xv. 15.     | II. Tim. i. 16.      |
| John xvii. 6.    | II. Tim. iii. 21.    |
| I. Cor. xiv. 12. | II. Tim. iii. 14-17. |
|                  | II. Tim. ii. 15.     |

## IV.— TRAINING.

One of the oldest schools in the history of the Church was the one inaugurated by Jesus of Nazareth when He invited men to follow Him, that He might make them to be “fishers of men.”

Whilst efficiency for any work may be acquired through the doing of it, one who has been wisely instructed in the theory, before entering upon its practice, has marked advantages over an unschooled person. The years Christ spent with His disciples were years of training for them. He had a great passion for personal work, as well as for the souls of men. He taught His disciples by precept and example. The theory of any system is simplified if the pupil may witness its exemplification. This has been one of the characteristics of the training class system projected and fostered by the International Committee of the Young Men’s Christian Associations. It is most gratifying to all persons interested in the development of a more aggressive type of Christian life to witness the large number of young men who in college and city association have availed themselves of these privileges, and who through the training thus afforded are rendering more efficient service in the constantly enlarging field of

Christian activity, and are become more valuable as members of their respective churches.

The object of this training is to acquire a better knowledge of the Scriptures with reference to their application in the prosecution of personal work, and to learn from the discussion of the use of such Scriptures how to meet the difficulties and objections so commonly found in dealing with individuals. The class system referred to, and the formation of one or more such classes in every Christian organization, cannot be too strongly recommended. It would materially strengthen the work of the young people's societies, and add greatly to the efficiency of their members, if some such method were intelligently employed and persistently continued. The following suggestions are made as a basis for organized study ; and in the appendix special "helps" are mentioned for its further development.

#### I. COMPOSITION OF THE CLASS.

The class should not be a large one, and it should be composed exclusively of men or exclusively of women. Six or eight persons are sufficient ; and if twelve or more desire to enter upon the study, it were better to have several classes limited to six members each. A small class is recommended in order that ample time may be given to discussion, and that each member may have the most favorable opportunity to ask questions and make suggestions. "The classes which have achieved

the greatest success are those the members of which have made and kept the following *mutual agreement*: (a) That they will engage in actual personal work, or, at least, make honest and persistent efforts to do so. (b) That they will give the equivalent of at least twenty minutes each day to preparation of the lesson. (c) That, unless providentially detained, they will attend the class regularly and be there on time."

## II. THE LEADER.

The leader should be competent to teach, and must have the respect and confidence of each member of the class. He should be familiar with the Scriptures, and be *doing* personal work, thus stimulating the members of his class by his example. He should possess a knowledge of men, and be able to devise plans for the prosecution of personal work, and should secure the coöperation of the class in perfecting his plans. Though he becomes the leader by virtue of his enlisting persons in the study of the subject, or by appointment, his position should be ratified by a formal vote of the class.

## III. MEMBERS.

Each member of a training class should be a Christian, *connected by membership with some evangelical church*. He must have a desire to win men to Christ, and must be self-sacrificing, for this may often be necessary for the accomplishment of the

object for which the class is organized. He must have a sense of the importance of the work proposed, and a firm conviction that the Bible is the word or God, and that the Gospel "is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

Too great care cannot be exercised in the composition of the class, for its sole object is to study the Scriptures and discuss methods of work with reference to winning men, one by one, to Jesus Christ, *and to strengthen character in those already won.* If the class is composed of college students, representatives from each of the college grades is desirable, unless it be practicable to have four or more members of each grade organize separately.

#### IV. CONDUCT OF THE CLASS.

*Place of meeting.* If in college, use a student's room in dormitory or boarding house. If in a Young Men's Christian Association, use a quiet room in the building. If in connection with the young people's society of the church, use the residence of some member of the class.

*Time of meeting.* Aim to find the most favorable time, as well as the most favorable place, for the meeting. Hold the meetings not less frequently than once in two weeks, once every week if possible. Do not consume more time in each session than forty-five minutes.

*Procedure.* Begin promptly, with a brief and direct petition to God for guidance and spiritual

discernment. Study the Scriptures with special reference to persons who have backslidden, and to those who have not yet accepted Christ. Hold the class to the topic under consideration. Avoid obscure texts of Scripture, and under no consideration permit the discussion of disputed questions or doctrines which have already divided the Church into so many denominations. In considering any special case of personal work, either from Scripture or from actual experience, let one member give the result of his study or work upon it since the last meeting. Let this be thoroughly discussed, and, so far as possible, have conclusions preserved by the members in their note-books.

\* *Difficulties likely to be encountered in the conduct of the class.*

(1) "The members do not attend regularly." Show them that only by regular attendance can they insure the success of the class, and that only in this way can they grasp the unity of the series of topics and appreciate the genius of this method. If a member stays away without a good excuse, let some other person have his place.

(2) "The members do not come on time." The best way to overcome this fault is for the leader always to begin and close on time. Some have found an advantage in closing the door at the time the class begins work. A person who is habitually

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\* From this point to the eighth paragraph on page 54 I have quoted from the Mott and Ober pamphlet on "Personal Work: How Organized and Accomplished."

late will hinder others in their work, and if, after being dealt with kindly, the habit is not corrected, he should be requested to give his place to some one else.

(3) "Some members say they do not have time to prepare." Many hints might be given in connection with this most common and least reasonable excuse, but the following, when conscientiously followed, have been found sufficient to remove the difficulty. First, suggest to them that a man generally finds time for the thing in which he is specially interested. Have them make a written schedule accounting for their entire time, and see if they cannot find at least twenty minutes a day on an average to devote to this important purpose. Secondly, urge them to make the test of putting their Bible study the first thing in the day, and making everything else bend to it.

(4) "The lesson cannot be covered in the required time." The leader should keep the reins of the class in his own hands. He should absolutely insist on asking all the questions himself during the larger part of the hour, leaving a few moments at the close for questions from others. As the art of asking questions properly is a difficult one, it should receive special thought on the part of the leader. This will help him to get more quickly at the heart of the subject, and thus save the time of the class. Do not wait too long for answers to questions. Help the class when necessary, by furnishing them

subdivisions on difficult topics and suggestive passages of Scripture. If necessary, take two or more sessions for the topic, though a special effort should usually be made to cover it within the required time.

(5) "Debates arise in the class." Whenever they are conducted in a wrong spirit, or lead away from the point under consideration, or are too prolonged, the leader should exercise his authority and put a stop to them. If any member causes particular trouble in this respect, speak to him privately about it. Above all things, conduct the class in a prayerful spirit. Begin with prayer; close with prayer; frequently call for special prayer; be instant in prayer, as building for eternity.

(6) "Some members will not do personal work." As has already been emphasized, assign them definite work to do, and give them points on how to do it. Pray with them about this work, and encourage them in what they try to do. The leader should be sure to set the example himself. If, after tactful and faithful effort on the part of the leader, a member should still fail to engage in personal work, he should be requested to yield his place in the class. In season and out of season, it must be emphasized and reiterated, that the only way to learn how to do personal work is by doing it.

(7) "I cannot lead the class." Make a conscientious trial before you give it up. Remember that one great object of this plan is to develop leaders. If after such a trial you are convinced that some

other available man can do better, have the grace to step down in his favor.

#### BIBLE DRILL.

Have Bibles and notebooks closed.

Take up each point of the topic, calling upon some member to repeat the passage from the Bible which will most clearly establish it.

Let another member give the exact location of the passage quoted, mentioning book, chapter, and verse, and, where necessary, showing its meaning in connection with the context. The real cases should be reviewed in the same way as the topics.

Require ready answers.

Insist on exact quotations.

The object of this Bible drill is to cultivate accuracy and readiness in the use of the Scriptures. Every successful personal worker must have these qualities,—must be ready for emergencies.

Care should be exercised that this drill may not become mechanical, but rather that it be conducted in the thoughtful and reverent spirit.

Enforce upon each member the necessity of watching for favorable conditions for approaching persons; not to hurry, but at the same time not to lose the opportunity when afforded. The pledging of members to see some one each day and present the matter of personal religion is not advisable, the tendency being to make the work perfunctory, if done at all under such pressure. It is likely to

do harm to both persons concerned in the transaction. Every member of a training class for personal work should be sufficiently interested in the spiritual welfare of others not to neglect any reasonable opportunity to invite their attention to the claims of the Gospel.

Let there be a mutual understanding that the discussions of actual cases known to the class be regarded and held strictly confidential. In fact, it were better not to discuss with persons outside the work of the class.

Before dismissing, engage in prayer for any special cases under consideration, and for each other, that each member may be faithful to his trust. Live a life above reproach, and "be an example to them that believe, in word, in manner of life, in love, in faith, in purity," and that by the blessing of Him whom we serve, each may become successful "fishers of men."



## METHODS.

“The secret of power in personal work is the wise use of ‘the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.’”

Gen. xxi. 16-18.	Num. xiv. 19, 20.
I. Kings xiii. 6.	Matt. xviii. 15.
Luke viii. 4.	Luke xxii. 31, 32.
John i. 35-46.	John iv. 6-15,
Acts viii. 29-39.	Acts xxviii. 8.
James v. 15, 16.	Rev. xxii. 17.

See methods employed by Jesus and His disciples.

## V.—METHODS.

The consideration of methods of doing personal work is a practical as it is an important part of the general subject. Since men are so different one from another, and the moods common to each individual so diverse, one cannot be expected to formulate a set of rules which, if observed, would prove equally effective, or even operative, in every case. Good judgment is necessary, in order that the best method may be devised and the most favorable condition discovered for its application.

The method of approach is of first importance. Ordinarily the case is lost or won in the way by which we approach a person. Of course God can overrule our blunders, and He may make our awkwardness serve His purpose. It were "better for the pot to boil over than not to boil at all." It is a mistake for us to wait until we feel confident of our ability to make the needed advance with unqualified acceptance. I have sometimes said that there are as many avenues of approach to men's hearts as there are men to approach. The wise worker will choose and use the way most likely to admit him into the confidence of the person approached. The need of naturalness cannot be too strongly emphasized. A mechanical effort to do personal work

is readily detected, and is always to be deprecated. No work requires more serious reflection and honest intention. Earnestness, real, genuine earnestness, frequently carries with it the power of conviction. One should avoid being transparently eager, but need not fear revealing his purpose. Make no apology for having come on your errand. Find some common ground for introductory conversation, and let it lead up to the object in mind.

The following incident will illustrate the worth of the above suggestion: A friend of the Young Men's Christian Association, desiring to assist in a concerted effort to cancel the indebtedness of the Association, determined to ask a contribution from one of the wealthiest men in the community, who was supposed to be unfavorably inclined toward such institutions. This man had in his residence a very fine collection of paintings of which he was justly proud, and nothing gave him more delight than to hear people praise his pictures. The friend of the Association sought an opportunity to see the pictures when the gentleman was not at home, and, calling at his office later in the day, expressed his thanks and gratification for having had an opportunity to see the paintings, and spoke particularly of the unusual merit which he had found in some of them. There was no difficulty now to keep up the conversation, and the two were soon talking as if they were old acquaintances. The caller's suggestion that a good picture would be of service to

the community if put occasionally in the way of young men who, ordinarily, had no convenient opportunity to see works of art, met a favorable response from his host ; and the further suggestion that the rooms of the Christian Association afforded an opportunity for such a kindness led him to make special inquiry about the work and condition of that organization. At the conclusion of an hour's conversation the caller came away with a subscription of three hundred dollars.

Let us now consider the method of dealing with a person after access has been secured. I wonder if Andrew, in finding his own brother, did not do more than merely ascertain his whereabouts ! To find a person may be unattended with any serious difficulty, but to ascertain the person's attitude toward Jesus and His teachings, to get him to express his views religiously, requires sagacity and skill, and calls for the nicest exercise of these qualities.

Having made a favorable impression, and being encouraged to advance, how shall one proceed ? This depends on the condition in which the person has been found. If he does not regard the Bible as divine,—as the word of God,—and the worker fails to convince him of this fact, it is doubtful if any real progress can be made. The Bible is *the* authority on all questions pertaining to the spiritual and eternal needs of men. There is no other book to which we can go. There are many external proofs

that the Bible is of divine origin: the fulfilment of the prophetic history of the Jews is proof; the birth, death, and resurrection of Christ is proof. The internal proofs are abundant, convincing, and conclusive. The code of morals contained in the Bible is so different from what man would devise that it could not have originated with man. The plan or way of salvation revealed is above the invention of human nature. Over and over again do we find the messages of the Bible prefaced with "Thus saith the Lord," "Hear the word of the Lord," "The word which came from the Lord." "This claim is confirmed by the holiness of the doctrine they taught and its spiritual power." And, as Dr. Spencer has said: "The religious system of the Bible is in all its parts *absolutely perfect*. I affirm this on the ground that no human reason can point out the least defect. It has told everything rightly. Men have misunderstood it sometimes; the human heart has often recoiled from its enjoined humility, gentleness, forgiveness of enemies, and so on; but it is an amazing truth, after all, that the Bible system is a perfect system. This is full evidence that its authors were not mere unaided men, but were inspired of God. For what else is there among all human things which wears the stamp of absolute perfection? It is impossible for any reasonable man to believe, if he is unprejudiced, that a set of men should have been able, through their unassisted abilities, to form a perfect system of doctrines and

duties, ranging from the infinitudes of God down to the various duties and inmost heart of man. If men have done this, it is a greater miracle than any one recorded in the Bible. Such men must have been something more than men.”\* The statement made by Jesus, in John vii. 17, might be used with profit at this point: “If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.”

And now, if the further declaration is made that Jesus is nothing more than a good man, and is therefore not infallible, some such procedure as the following would probably facilitate matters: “What is your own honest opinion of Jesus of Nazareth? Whilst He lived among men and mingled with them and loved them, was He not apart from and above all men? Was He not, is He not, the unique character in all the world? Is not His resurrection from the dead as well authenticated as any ancient historic fact? How will you account for Him?” Press the person to say what he really believes, and carefully note what it is, and then have Scripture to apply as the need is presented; as, for instance, should the person say, “You are urging me to believe, and yet I must believe what I cannot see, relying simply on the testimony of some man or men whom I do not know, and I have no way of knowing that they were not mistaken,” refer him to

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\* “*Evidences of Divine Revelation*,” by Dr. Ichabod S. Spencer, published by The American Tract Society; which will be helpful in the study of this subject.

I. John v. 6-12, John xx. 29, I. Peter i. 8, 9, using as much Scripture, or as little, as the case, in your judgment, may require. A reasonably good knowledge of the Bible will enable the worker to command and apply such verses as will be most applicable, and thus, using God's word, He may be relied upon to make your work effective. Expect to lead the person, but do not be discouraged if you fail to convince him of the truth. The truth may come through the head, but the heart must appropriate it. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness." As Pascal expresses it: "The heart has reasons which the reason does not know. It is the heart that feels God, not the reason. There are truths that are felt, and there are truths that are proved; for we know truth, not only by the reason, but by that intuitive conviction which may be called the heart. The primary truths are not demonstrable, and yet our knowledge of them is none the less certain. *Principles are felt; propositions are proved.* Truths may be above reason, and yet not be contrary to reason."

#### THE INVITATION METHOD.

This method applies more particularly to securing attendance at religious meetings, or to bringing persons in contact with leaders who are specially fitted to instruct them. The first may be done by verbal solicitation, or by the distribution of cards of announcement or invitation. There can be no difficulty in doing this phase of personal work except

from natural diffidence or reticence. The attendance at all the meetings of our religious organizations would be greatly enlarged, and the membership of the organizations be increased and strengthened, if this simple method of personal work were kept in operation. A young man who had nearly completed his college course had become a victim of pernicious habits, and was leading a profligate life. Bent on self-destruction, he was one day hurrying along one of the crowded thoroughfares of Chicago, when a member of the Young Men's Christian Association handed him a card of invitation to a "Gospel Meeting," simply saying, "Good music, better come around." This little incident — it was not an accident — diverted his attention from the crime on which his mind was bent. It turned his steps into the place of prayer. The cordial greeting he received on entering the building touched his heart. The discourse appealed to his reason. The Spirit of God arrested him. He tarried and went into the inquiry meeting, and then and there accepted Jesus as his Saviour.

It will sometimes happen that you will find a person to be desirous of information which you are unable to give, and you will then seek to bring him in touch with a worker competent to give the needed instruction. Be sure, in such a case, that the worker to whom you take the person *is* really competent. Your pastor, the general secretary of the Young Men's Christian Association, or the pastor in the denomination for which the inquirer has

expressed a preference, ought to be thoroughly competent, and either of these would be the one to whom you would most naturally turn at such a time.

#### THE CORRESPONDENCE METHOD.

A brief letter expressing genuine concern for the spiritual condition and need of the person addressed, with a carefully chosen verse or two of Scripture, may be used without the slightest impropriety. This may be accompanied with the statement (though it would be better to make such statement later) that you would like to offer a few suggestions as to the remedy for his need. In using Scripture texts in correspondence, *write them out in full*, in a legible hand, and give chapter and verse.

Occasionally a tract selected with special reference to the person's known condition may be used in connection with a letter. Write over your own signature, and enclose a stamped envelope for reply.

#### THE PRAYER METHOD.

Too strong emphasis cannot be laid on the importance and necessity of prayer in connection with every phase of personal work.

“ More things are wrought by prayer  
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy voice  
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.  
For what are men better than sheep or goats  
That nourish a blind life within the brain,  
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer  
Both for themselves and those who call them friend?  
For so the whole round world is every way  
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.”

The prayer method can be employed when access has been denied, or when the individual is beyond our reach. He may be acquainted with our purpose or not, according to circumstances. It is as well at some period of our active prayerful interest to let the subject of our prayers know that we are thus engaged in his behalf. A godly woman, an invalid, said to her husband as he was leaving her bedside, "I've been praying for you, my dear, for many years. When my prayer is answered my cup of joy will be full." Her words proved the winged arrow that touched his heart. There was no longer waiting for the answer.

Prayer for the conversion of individuals may be engaged in alone, or with one or more interested friends, or with the individual prayed for.

(a.) *Alone*: as the mother prays for her son when all others have given him up; as the commercial traveler prayed for the writer when the writer's name had been put on his "prayer list"; as Sir George Williams, when a boy, prayed for his employer, who discovered him in the quiet of his room, and heard him pouring out his heart to God in his behalf.

(b.) *Prayer in little groups for special cases*. This method is common among Christian college students, and has proved effective in many instances. There would be little difficulty in employing this method in any community. The young people's societies of the churches could use it to good advantage.

Its employment in Yale University is referred to in "A Yale Reminiscence," by A. A. Stagg, in the February number of *The Intercollegian*: "When we started our personal work groups at Yale in 1890, we made a definite effort to support the Christian life of certain men, who were getting under the influence of the 'jolly fellows,' and with a measure of success. We also took steps to surround the lives of others, who were somewhat weak, with such helpful influences as we were able. We went still further, and tried to arouse the indifferent, to smooth the path of the skeptical, and to bring one and all into close relationship with Christ. In the conduct of our personal work by the group system we found that a short meeting of the group daily was most helpful and stimulating. These meetings were most useful when most spiritual, for they often furnished the motive power for the doing of hard things. The best preparation for doing personal work is, first, to be filled with a sympathetic sense of some person's need; and, second, to be overpowered with the thought that you are the one to help him. Looking back on my college days from a perspective of ten years, I have only one regret, — not of wasted hours, not of slighted studies, not of lost opportunities for Yale learning, — but only that I might have saved the lives of two classmates, who went in dishonor to their graves."

(c.) *Prayer with the individual whose conversion is desired.* This would of necessity be with his

consent. It would be well if he could be prevailed on to join in prayer, either to repeat the prayer with you or pray for himself.

In concluding this chapter, I desire to offer a few hints concerning the application of methods; for, after all, there is probably more in the mode of application than in the method itself.

1. Work, as a rule, with persons of your own age, or younger, and with persons of your own sex.

2. Seek an opportunity to converse with the person alone.

3. Use the Bible. You may quote Scripture texts if you can do it accurately; but ordinarily it is better to have the person you are trying to lead into the way read aloud the verse you suggest, and wait for some expression of his opinion on it. Few passages, wisely selected, may be better than many, because the few are less likely to confuse.

4. Avoid controverted questions of minor importance, and as far as possible avoid argument. Discussion is not the remedy for sin. If you lay down a proposition, however, be ready to prove it. If you state a principle, be sure you feel it; and since such a feeling is born of experience, pray God that He will beget in your friend a similar experience.

5. Do not be drawn by an unconverted person into a discussion of the amusement question. Present Christ as the needed help in the solution of all questions. A very dear friend of the writer's once suggested to him that he could not become a

Christian unless he discontinued the use of ale as a beverage. This became a convenient excuse for not accepting Christ, until another friend suggested that the will be surrendered to God, and the ale question be settled afterward. This put the same truth in a little different light. Since yielding my heart to Christ I have never used ale.

6. Whether your work necessitates few or many calls, involves few or many interviews, be patient; do not hurry. *More men are won by siege than by attack.* Keep sweet; and in all your effort aim to bring the individual to a definite commitment of himself to the Lord Jesus Christ. Your own method, if prayerfully applied, is more likely to be successful than some method suggested by another.

7. If the person with whom you have gained an audience claims to be an infidel or an agnostic, and declares he has no interest in these higher things, you have probably gone as far as you can go, unless you are led to pray for him and thus carry him in your heart.

8. Make a note of each case that comes to your attention, in a book specially provided for the purpose, with full comment on the details of conversation, so that you may refer to it as you continue to study to win men to Christ.

## ILLUSTRATIONS FROM SCRIPTURE.

“And the messenger that went to call Micaiah spake unto him, saying, Behold now, the words of the prophets declare good unto the king with one mouth: let thy word, I pray thee, be like the word of one of them, and speak thou good. And Micaiah said, As the Lord liveth, what the Lord saith unto me, that will I speak.”

“Again on the morrow John was standing, and two of his disciples; and he looked upon Jesus as He walked, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God! And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.”

The following references are but a few of the many gathered from the experiences of our Lord and His apostles. With these as a basis, it would be most helpful to the reader if he should study the New Testament with reference to its bearing on personal work.

- |                   |                 |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| Matt. xix. 16-22. | Mark i. 40-45.  |
| Mark ix. 14-29.   | Mark x. 46-52.  |
| John i. 29-51.    | John iii. 1-21. |
| John iv. 1-30.    | John v. 1-9.    |
| John xxi. 15-17.  | Acts iii. 1-8.  |
| Acts viii. 26-39. | Acts. x. 7, 8.  |

## VI.—ILLUSTRATIONS FROM SCRIPTURE.\*

The following illustrations will show the methods Jesus used in some of His personal interviews. If these and other examples found in the New Testament are carefully studied, they will prove instructive in showing the adroitness with which Jesus approached men and the truth He applied in awaking in them a sense of their own need and in winning them to Himself.

*Nicodemus.* In this man we have a religionist, a nice observer of the law; a teacher, an expounder of the law. He is neither a trifler nor a mocker, nor is he an agnostic. He believes in God, and believes that Jesus is a teacher come from God. He is a rationalist, thoughtful, timid, politic. He seeks an interview with this teacher whose signs and sayings had commanded his attention, and in coming to Him makes a very frank admission of his belief, but “in it is inconsistency, reservation, and mental timidity.” Jesus puts to test his belief in Him as a teacher, and at the same time tells him that the thing of first importance to himself is not

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\* These illustrations are adapted from “Conversations of Jesus Christ,” by Rev. William Adams, D. D.

Christ's kingdom, but his own relation to that kingdom. "The kingdom of God which He came to establish is not external, but interior and spiritual, consisting of gracious dispositions, of love, and joy in the Holy Ghost ; and if one is to share in it at all, he must be brought into affinity with it by a change in himself." And then, in the most natural way, with consummate adroitness, He directs his attention to a matter where reason finds its limit without the solution of the problem—birth. "Ye must be born again." And, using that most admirable analogy of the wind, He shows how it is invisible, and yet how evident are its results : "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the voice thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh and whither it goeth : so is every one that is born of the Spirit." This analogy, so simple, would help Nicodemus to exercise faith in the declaration and work of Him who came from God. But he repeats his question, How ? and thus exposes his unreasonableness. Now Jesus, with masterful skill, avoiding controversy upon a subject the mystery of which cannot be revealed to the understanding, shows "the teacher of Israel" his inconsistency, and demands the exercise of faith as a logical result of his own premises. Reason has its boundary, and when this is reached, "faith is the continuation of reason." Jesus shows this not in explaining, or attempting to explain, the new birth, but by pressing upon the attention of Nicodemus the *reasonableness of faith*

through the analogy He used; and throughout the conversation He held the man to this as his need. "It is not your knowing, your understanding, but your *receiving* in true faith what is affirmed by myself, the Christ of God, commissioned and accredited to teach and redeem the world."

*The Woman of Samaria.* Faint and weary, our Lord, having come to Sychar, sat near the famous well. He was alone, His disciples having gone into the city to buy food. A woman of Samaria came to draw water from the well. How natural it was for this stranger to ask the Samaritan woman for a drink of water! And yet it did not so seem to her, for Jesus was a Jew,—she had discovered this in His dress,—and the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans. True, but this Jew would have dealings with all sects and nationalities and with all persons. There is no boundary within which the great gift of His love may be confined. There was the highest wisdom in the Master's method of approach to this woman. His request had excited her interest in Him, a person whom she needed to know, and her exclamation of surprise gave Him the opportunity to direct her attention to a spiritual gift, the need of which she had not yet recognized. "If thou knewst the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him and he would have given thee living water." He has not come to seek and to talk with some one simply because He has pledged Himself

to do it, and therefore He has not approached this woman in a perfunctory way. How natural was the conversation! Nothing mechanical about it. His great, sympathizing heart yearns for the heart of this obtuse sensualist. Jesus would make no discrimination between persons to whom the water of life should be given. If He could make this woman see her need His heart would rejoice. Her mind was on water that slakes thirst only for a little while. She judged of everything by her senses. Jesus has no pitcher, no rope, nothing to draw with; could He have access to water better than that in the well which Jacob gave, and could it be more easily secured? And now to her querying mind He gives food for higher thought: "Every one that drinketh of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up unto eternal life." Still the poor woman could not see above her own bodily need. She catches the idea that perhaps this man may have water—literal water—that will prevent further thirst, and save her from her daily troublesome task; so she says, "Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come all the way hither to draw." Now she had asked a favor of Him. She had forgotten the distinction between the Jews and the Samaritans. Jesus had dropped some seed thoughts into her mind that would germinate by and by. She was

slow to discern the import of His statements, but He was patient and tactful. Having aroused her curiosity, and awakened some desire in her for something which He had to give, He changed His method of procedure. He would show her now to herself. He would turn her thoughts, for the moment, away from water and from Himself to herself, to her own sinful life. He requests her to call her husband, and through this request shows her that He knows her life. At once she exclaims, "Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet!" In the words that followed she may have attempted to change the subject, which doubtless to her was very unpleasant. If she did Jesus takes advantage of it, and teaches her that true religion is not external worship in this or that place or according to this or that form, but that it is the approach of the soul to God through Jesus Christ; and He then declares, "I that speak unto thee am He." This awakens in her soul a different desire, a desire that she had never had until now; and, forgetting her water jar, her soul filled with wonder, her mind awakened and probably illumined with divine truth, she hastens into the city to tell the people about this wonderful stranger who had told her all the things that ever she did, and who, she had begun to believe, was the Christ.

*The Young Ruler.* Here is a character the exact opposite of the one we have just been considering. He has high social position, is wealthy and

refined. He regards eternal life as of the utmost importance, and will do anything necessary to secure it. He approaches Jesus reverently, and desires to know just what he needs to do. He is strictly correct in every observance of the law, but recognizes the need of doing something else to perfect the process by which he would win this great prize. According to his definition of goodness, he is the pink of perfection. Mark the language employed in his request : "Good master, what good thing shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" He had been doing good things. He came not as a sinner, but as a righteous man, a man of exemplary character, unconscious of the need of any forgiveness, simply desiring this quality of life which he had not yet obtained. The Master was again skillful in this splendid illustration of personal work, in meeting this young man on the humanitarian plane, above which in all his doing he had not gotten. Jesus did not condemn his good works, nor did He expose his conceit. He would impress upon him the lesson he needed to learn, namely, that eternal life was not attained by doing good merely, but that it was in being. In this He touches the root of the matter and exposes the fallacy of this theory of goodness, and lifts the mind of this cultured young man to the lofty plane of divine perfection. But how discreetly the master advances! He bids him "keep the commandments if he would enter into life." This is just what the moralist boasts himself of doing.

"He had abstained from every vice and immorality condemned in the decalogue," and so he admired himself in the mirror of the law. "In the consciousness of his untarnished morality, he puts the question, 'What lack I yet?'" This won him the highest reward the moralist could win from the "good Master"—the look of love. Morality can secure the loving look of Christ, but it cannot secure eternal life. "What lack I yet?" "Yet one thing thou lackest: not *only* one thing, but one thing thou lackest, as Dr. Adams suggests, and that is the *whole*. Good enough, admirable enough, so far as it goes; measured on your humanitarian and visible plane is your law keeping; but in the eye which reads the heart and inspects the invisible dispositions, there is a defect which vitiates the whole. You are utterly wanting in that love which is the keeping of the whole law." And now Jesus puts the test. He proves to him how far from perfection his goodness is. Legal obedience could not win eternal life, and so Jesus says, "If thou wouldest be perfect, go, sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me." The real need of the young ruler was met only in Christ. To this conclusion all the conversation converged. So must it always be with us in doing personal work. Whoever the person, whatever the difficulties, however unfavorable the environment, we aim to center thought on Christ, and to yield obedience to His requirements. We *may*

reach the heart through the head, but *we must reach and touch the heart.*

*Peter, the Penitent Backslider.* After his desertion of his friend and master, one would think Peter unworthy of recognition. "He must have felt an unusual heaviness at heart when he recalled his own perfidy and blasphemy and cowardice." This day of denial had not been long past. The risen Lord had seen and conversed with Peter. He named him specially among the disciples to whom He sent information concerning His resurrection. Peter was penitent, and doubtless longed for some token of forgiveness. He had gone back to his old occupation, and was fishing on this occasion with six of his fellow disciples. They had toiled all night and taken nothing. Day was breaking when a stranger hailed them from the shore with the words, "Children have ye aught to eat?" The abrupt answer would indicate that Peter was the one to respond. The "No" was met with, "Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and ye shall find." "They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes." John was first to recognize Jesus, and he probably whispered to Peter, "It is the Lord." It was just like Peter, impetuous fellow that he was, to plunge into the sea and strike out for the shore in an attempt to meet first the master whom he had so ignominiously denied a little while ago. We do not know if any words passed between Jesus and Peter before the

ones recorded in John's account of this touching incident; but it is more than likely that Peter with the rest of the disciples engaged in general conversation with the Lord. There was probably no reference made to Peter's fall during the meal, but after dinner, in the presence of John, and maybe before the company, to enforce a lesson upon the mind of each one, Jesus put a probe into the heart of the penitent disciple. But how adroitly He did it, how gently He rebuked him! It drew forth Peter's confession in the words, "Thou knowest that I love thee." Jesus did not doubt his love, but He knew that the poor fellow needed a reprimand for his self-confidence and boasting. This He would give, but without upbraiding. The allusion to his denial was made with the nicest delicacy, and though it grieved Peter to have the same question put to him three times, he cried from his heart, "Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I love Thee." Not more than the others, would he now say; but he loved Him, and Jesus knew it. All doubt of his restoration was now dispelled. He was fully restored to favor, and commissioned to work; and, as Jesus concluded with the words, "Follow me," he was given an immediate opportunity to prove his love.



ILLUSTRATIONS FROM  
LIFE.



## VIII.—ILLUSTRATIONS FROM LIFE.

In this chapter I may be permitted to relate an incident which has meant much in the life of the writer, and the publication of which has been often requested. It is a good illustration of the naturalness and ease with which personal work can be done, and I trust its recital may prove an incentive to many to go and do likewise.

Mr. E. R. Graves, the commercial traveler to whom this book is inscribed, was employed by a paper house in New York City, and sold the writer, who was then engaged in business, large quantities of wrapping paper and paper bags. The salesman had soon discovered that his customer was very systematic, a stickler for order in everything about his establishment, and that he was particularly proud of his word. He boasted that his "word was as good as his bond"; this, in fact, was his religion.

One morning after mail had been examined, and matters requiring early attention had been disposed of, the proprietor, as was his custom, was about to join a few business friends for a ten o'clock glass of beer. The commercial traveler met the proprietor at the door. His familiar words were, "Open for anything in my line?" "See you a little later; am

just going to have a glass of beer with a few friends, won't you join us?" "No, thank you," was the polite reply, "I never drink." And then he added, "Just a moment please; I have a little book I'd like to have you read. I buy them at my own expense, and am obliged, therefore, to be careful in their distribution. Will you read it?" His pleasant manner and frankness led the proprietor to say, "Yes, if it will do you any good." And he handed me a neatly printed tract on intemperance. He had gotten the promise of a man who was proud of his word, and I had gotten a tract which I had promised to read.

Reaching the room where my friends were waiting for me, it required but a few minutes to acquaint them with my recent experience. With tract in hand and promise fresh in mind, I insisted on reading the little book then and there. There were but eight or ten pages; they could be read hastily; and with the beer on the table I proceeded to read aloud. Throwing the tract on the table and ordering more beer, we spent a little time in discussing the "missionary," as we called him, and determined on a line of argument with which to meet him on my return to the store.

The salesman awaited my coming, received my order for goods, and, after a bit of general conversation on business, he withdrew, without making the slightest reference to my habit or his tract. This was the first advance he had made, and it was successful. I felt a keen disappointment in not having

an opportunity to work my argument on him, but of course could not let him know it, and so pocketed my feelings, and he went his way.

In due time he came again. This time we met on the street. After the usual inquiry about trade, he said, "By the way, when I was here last time I gave you a little book ; have you read it ?" "Why yes," I replied, "read it the same day, and wondered why you didn't say something about it when I came back to the store." "Oh," he replied, "there was no necessity of saying anything ; I simply desired that you should read it." We had made an engagement for business later in the day, and before leaving me he said, "I don't want to bore you, but I have another little book which I wish you would read. It is on a different subject ; I am sure it won't do you any harm." I said, "The other one did me no good, and I doubt if this one will." His reply was that we read a good many books that do us little if any good, and that the ones he carried required but little time to run through. And then with his pleasant "good day," he shook my hand and said, "I'd like to have you read this one and tell me what you think of it." The request was so modestly made that I took the book and promised to tell him what I thought about it.

I was more or less disturbed to find that the subject of this tract was profanity. There it was in large block letters, PROFANITY. And now I indulged in a sort of soliloquy after this fashion : "Queer chap !

Wonder what he's driving at! Has he heard me use profane language? Rather impertinent sort of a fellow. It would be more gentlemanly for him not to meddle in my affairs. I wish I hadn't promised to read the thing." However, I read the book, and with considerable interest, and found myself in hearty accord with the general tenor of its contents. But why should this man have such an interest in me? What difference did it make to him whether I was given to this bad habit, or any other, or many habits? I had a right to do as I pleased. His business was to sell goods to men who would pay their bills, and he had gone, it seemed to me, just a little beyond the bounds of propriety in interfering with the private rights of his customer.

The next time he came it was the busiest season of the year — about Christmas time. My order had been made out and was waiting for him, so that it required but a few minutes to place it. His request to have a word with me in private excited the suspicion that his house had a special message for me, and I went into the private office with more or less of misgiving. There were no preliminary remarks. He just said, "My dear fellow, I've sold your father goods for a long time before I sold you, and through conversation with him I have come to know a good deal about your mother. She must have been a very godly woman. Only yesterday he was telling me about her death, and the great triumph of her faith." He had now touched the tenderest spot in my heart.

Any reference to my mother awakened the most affectionate memories. "Yes," I said, "I had one of the best mothers in the world." Laying his hand on my shoulder, and looking me straight in the eyes, he said, "She was a praying woman. Do you believe in prayer?" My reply was, "Yes, but I do not pray." Whereupon he took from his pocket a little book, saying, "This is not another tract I want to inflict on you, but simply a memorandum book containing the names of business acquaintances who have given their consent for me to pray for them. Can I have your name on the same conditions?" It was an unexpected turn in the conversation, but the request was so reasonable, and so unobjectionably made, that without a moment's hesitation I consented, saying, "You can have my name; you can put it down if it will do you any good." "I prefer to have you write it," said he; "I want your autograph." With trembling hand I took the book. I noticed, on the page opposite the one on which I was to write, the names of several men, two or three of which were marked off. Presuming that he had wearied of praying for them, and feeling that somehow or other I had gotten into a trap, I hesitated and said, "What do you want to pray for me for?" And then in the frankest possible manner, with the keenest interest depicted in his face, he said, "I want to ask God to make you a Christian." Having determined not to be a Christian, I said, "That's too big a contract for you to take. The fact is, I've

made up my mind not to be a Christian ; and, moreover, there are a good many things in connection with the whole business I cannot believe." He was too wise a worker to be drawn into argument at this point, and simply said, "If you'll give me your name, I'll be most happy to have it." I wrote my name, he took the book, put it back into his pocket, and then taking my hand, said, "I confidently expect my prayer to be answered," and bade me good-bye.

The next time he came we were both eager to get to his room in the hotel. He had heard of my acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ. Reaching his room, we bowed at the same chair, and, taking from his pocket his "Prayer List," he opened the book at the page on which my name was written, and, checking it off, we praised God, amidst tears of rejoicing, *for another answered prayer.*

It was some time after this experience that this same man, under conviction that the writer ought to be engaged in some kind of Christian service, besought him to give up business and enter the Lord's work. It was under his persistent, but wise, effort, that I soon went to Lockport, N. Y., to inaugurate a temperance movement among the children. Through God's blessing, so successful was the undertaking that in six or eight weeks a temperance sentiment was created that stirred the entire city. Hundreds of children signed the total abstinence pledge, and scores of drinking men and women were led to

abandon the cup, and were won to lives of sobriety. It was during my stay in Lockport that the work of the Young Men's Christian Association was brought to my attention, and, following what seemed to be the guidance of the Lord, I became General Secretary of the Association in that city. After two years, I accepted a like position in Syracuse, N. Y., and two years later became the Secretary of the State Committee of the Young Men's Christian Associations of Massachusetts.

It was during this latter term of service that I met Mr. C. K. Ober, a student in Williams College, and prevailed on him to prepare and read a paper before the Association State Convention. This resulted in Mr. Ober entering the work of the Associations. He in turn persuaded Mr. John R. Mott, of Cornell University, to enter Association work among students. In course of time Mr. Mott made his memorable journey around the world, organizing the World's Christian Student Federation. In the providence of God each of these men was dependent, to some extent, on another. The commercial traveler, Sayford, Ober, and Mott, followed the one after the other in natural sequence ; and this world encircling movement known as the Student Federation was one of the ultimate results of that incident which occurred between the commercial traveler and his customer nearly thirty years before.

The following extracts from letters of Mr. Ober have a place in the telling of the story, and will

serve to further illustrate the importance of persistent effort:—

Mr. Ober says, in a letter to the author: "About your getting me into Association work, it was your remorseless persistency in compelling me to write the college paper for and attend the State Convention at Spencer, in 1881. I had declined five times, and then you surprised me by sending me a Convention program containing my name for the service referred to. I was vexed at first, but it occurred to me that it might possibly be providential leading, and so I decided to comply. I am satisfied now that it was providential. The reading of my paper at the Convention attracted the attention of Mr. R. C. Morse, General Secretary of the International Committee, who was present. He reported it to Mr. McBurney, and they got Mr. Wishard two or three months later to visit Williams College and follow me up. On the strength of his report, I received a call to the assistant secretaryship in New York City with Mr. McBurney, and after six months with him you got me to join you in the State work in Massachusetts, and about six months later you slipped out and left me under the work."

Concerning the next link in the chain, Mr. Ober writes: "Mott was at Cornell in the spring of 1888, about to graduate. He had been at Mt. Hermon in 1886, and had attended the New York State Conventions in the fall of 1887 and 1888. The 1888 convention was held at Harlem, New York City, and

at that time Morse, Wishard, and our chairman, Mr. Cephas Brainard, had dealt with him about becoming a College Secretary of the Committee with myself, as Mr. Wishard was about leaving for his four years' tour in foreign mission lands. I had recommended Mott to the Committee for their work, but when their official call reached him I was in some distant part of the country, and on my return to New York about a month later I learned that Mott had not given his answer, although I remember that both Morse and Wishard expressed to me their conviction that everything possible had been done to impress him with the importance of this work, and to influence him to accept the call, and they were sanguine as to his acceptance. I felt otherwise, however, and made a special trip to Cornell to get to the bottom of the matter with him. I found that he had practically decided *not* to accept the call, so I spent about two hours with him, meeting his objections one by one, giving him an inside view of the life, the work and opportunities of a College Secretary, and putting the burden of proof upon him to show why he should not regard this opening as a direct call of God to a special work for which he was peculiarly qualified. Mott took careful notes of all the facts I gave him and the outlines of my argument, and promised to consider them with earnest prayer. This was all: it was a case where the Spirit of God apparently was leading. I did not feel specially solicitous, but was satisfied to leave the

result with God and with Mott's conscience. Mott went to the train with me, and, stepping under an old shed by the depot, out of the rain, while the train on which I was to leave was approaching, we committed the whole matter to God in prayer. It was not a long prayer meeting, but the two of us who agreed there to ask the privilege of working together for God not only received the answer to our prayer, but have been able to agree ever since."

#### A COLLEGE INCIDENT.

The following incident illustrates how comparatively easy a difficult case may be won by dependence on God and the use of His word.

In a prominent state university a brilliant young student, proud of his skeptical notions, and desirous that all his fellows should know of his determination not to become a Christian, came into my room at the hotel with a friend whose earnest and persistent solicitation could no longer be disregarded. On being introduced, the skeptical student said that he came simply to gratify his friend, and to meet me socially; that he had no desire to argue any religious question, and on that point I could do him no good.

Taking his hand, I said, "Perhaps I may not be able to do you any good, but I have a friend with me who can."

"Why," said he, "I thought you traveled alone."

"No," I replied, "I never travel alone; the Lord Jesus always goes with me; and some of the students tell me you do not believe there is such a person."

"The men are mistaken, sir," was the quick response. "I'm not a fool; I believe in the historic character called Jesus of Nazareth."

Whereupon I asked him where he got his information about this remarkable man, and when he told me from "sacred and profane history," I suggested that we turn to a copy of "sacred history" which I had with me, and see how far we agreed on certain prominent events in the life of Jesus. On my assuring him that I had no desire to draw him into argument, he consented.

Opening the book and turning to John's Gospel, I read portions from the record of the Lord's sufferings in the week when he was crucified, and was surprised and rejoiced to find that we agreed perfectly until we came to the account of His crucifixion. Here the young man saw that he was in danger of accepting the whole story, and with considerable animation said, "Mr. Sayford, you're setting a trap for me."

"No," said I, "I am setting no trap, and we may discontinue our investigation at this point if you desire."

But seeing that he was rather inclined to proceed, I asked, "Do you believe that he was crucified?"

He replied, "They say so."

"Who says so?" was my further inquiry; and when he answered, "The writers," I pressed the question, "Do you believe what the writers say?"

"Yes," was the response, "but I do not believe in the resurrection."

"Well," I replied, "what was done with the body?"

He repeated the account of the burial, the rolling of the stone against the mouth of the tomb, the sealing of the stone, and the placing of the guard. When I said, "Do you believe all this?" he replied, "If I'm honest and fair, I'll have to believe it, since I believe the other part of the record."

Regarding the moment one of supreme importance, I lifted my heart to God in silent prayer and pressed home the vital question, "Do you believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead?"

Bursting into tears, the young student exclaimed: "Why, yes, I believe it all; but how is it that I believe? What has produced this change in my position?"

There could be no other reply to his question than that the Holy Spirit had opened his mind, and, though he but faintly realized what that meant, it was the dawning of the light in his soul. We knelt in prayer of thanksgiving and in petition for further illumination and guidance. Then and there he accepted Christ as his Saviour, and to-day he is pastor of a church in one of our largest cities, preaching the blessed Gospel with great acceptance and with good results.

In another institution there was a student who, having made choice of law for his profession, and being among the leaders in scholarship in the university, was dubbed "Judge" among his fellows. He was an avowed infidel or agnostic, fond of argument; and he generally got the best of the wordy discussions into which he frequently entered.

At the suggestion of some of his friends, and with his consent, I met him for conversation, and, as is generally the case under such circumstances, found him well fortified with questions that I was unable to answer satisfactorily. Failing, apparently, to make the slightest impression, I concluded that he was one of a large class in every community who are obstinate and do not desire to be convinced of the truth, and hence a man upon whom it was not desirable to spend very much time.

In the closing meeting of a brief series the "Judge" was present. The object of this meeting was to secure pledges for money with which to erect a building for the college Young Men's Christian Association; and to the surprise of us all, this skeptical student made a contribution of one hundred dollars.

While engaged in prayer as we were about to close the meeting, the suggestion came to me, *Press the "Judge" for a decision now*; and, without debating the question of the wisdom or advisability of such a method, desiring above all else to obey what I believed to be the voice of the Lord, I asked the men to tarry for just a few minutes, and, turning to the

unbeliever who is the subject of this sketch, I said : “Judge, your position concerning religion or Christianity is well known here, and because of your views on the subject doubtless all of us are surprised at the contribution you offer for this Association enterprise. Having a conviction that I am obeying the voice of God, I want to ask you to make another contribution, alongside of which your hundred-dollar subscription will sink into insignificance. Will you give your heart to Jesus Christ ?”

Humanly speaking, there was great impropriety in thus calling attention to an individual in a “students’ meeting.” Thoughtful, conservative men would call it absurd. But the audience sat spell bound, all criticism was disarmed, and in a moment the “Judge” sprang to his feet and exclaimed, “By the grace of God, I will !”

Coming from the meeting with me, he said : “That extraordinary action of yours convinces me of a higher power. I have no argument with which to meet it. I believe in Jesus as the Son of God.”

Thus did we find a most gratifying reward of obedience, learn the comparatively little worth of argument, and get a striking illustration of the text, “Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord.”

#### A BUSINESS MAN’S TROPHY.

At a State Convention of Young Men’s Christian Associations, a young student from a prominent

New England college stood talking with a delegate. The college man was pointed out to Mr. H. M. Moore, of Boston, as a splendid fellow, captain of the foot-ball team in college, very popular, but not a Christian. Mr. Moore, always watchful for opportunities to interest young men in the good news of the Gospel, was not long in finding favorable conditions for conversation with this young man. Approaching him, he shook hands; asked him what college he represented; how he was enjoying the Convention, etc.; and then said, "How long have you been a Christian?" The young man hesitated, when Mr. Moore said, "Can't you quite say it?" "No, I cannot," he replied. "Well, I'm sorry," said Mr. Moore; "I think the religion of Jesus Christ the best thing a man can possess. Would you object to telling me just what you think about it? Be frank, and if you don't believe in it, say so." "Well," he replied, "I believe it is a good thing." "Don't you want all the good things there are?" "I suppose so," the student answered smiling. Asking for, and receiving his name, Mr. Moore said, "I don't want to bore you on the subject,—that is a poor way to help a man into the kingdom,—but I am interested in you. Let me ask you if the eternal destiny of one's soul is not worth serious thought." "Yes, sir," was his instant reply. "Well, will you calmly and intelligently give such thought to your own condition?" "I will," he said. And then, as Mr. Moore bade him good-day, he invited him to the

farewell meeting of the Convention, and asked if he would remain to the close of the meeting and come up to bid him good-bye. The student acceded to this request.

At the close of the farewell meeting he made good his promise. Mr. Moore thanked him for coming, and suggested that his influence among his fellows in college might be used for the glory of God if only he were a Christian, and then and there pressed him to accept Jesus Christ as his Saviour. The young man would not yield, though he confessed he was deeply interested, but said, "I cannot to-night." "Well," said Mr. Moore, "I must bid you good-night. I wish you knew the blessed rest in Christ. I'll keep you on my heart. By the way, have you a piece of paper?" He took a piece from his pocket and handed it to Mr. Moore, who simply wrote his name on it, with his business address, and handing it back to the young man, said: "There is my address. When you are converted, will you write me and let me know it?" The student promised he would, and they parted.

About four weeks later Mr. Moore received a letter from him, in which he said: "I might have written two or three weeks ago, but I wanted to test myself and know that I was His. The matter is settled now. I mean to live a pronounced Christian life in college." Later Mr. Moore sent him a book, and wrote him, congratulating him on his manly course, and exhorting him ever to be true to the

Lord Jesus. What a blessing could many other Christian business men be to young men if they were alert for opportunities for such work!

#### A PASTOR'S EXPERIENCE.

In visiting among my people one morning, a lady informed me that a physician in the village, with whom I had some acquaintance, was confined to his room by a severe cold, and his friends had some apprehensions that it might result in his death. I immediately went to his room to see him, and found him on his bed. He assured me that he had no apprehensions of any other serious effects from his present indisposition than confinement from his business for a few weeks. He said he was taken with an inflammation of the lungs, and had used such thorough means to reduce it that it had left him very weak, but he thought he should soon recover.

After conversing with him upon the general subject of religion, I requested him to take the tenth chapter of Romans, and study it as he would a medical book, and give me his opinion of its meaning when I called again.

The second time I called, as soon as I was seated, he said to me, "I cannot understand that chapter you gave me to study when you were here last."

"What part of it, doctor, don't you understand?"

"That part that says, 'If we will confess with our mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe with our heart that God raised him from the dead, we shall be saved.'"

"Why, my dear sir, there is no hidden meaning to that passage ; it tells us a simple truth, and must be understood just like any other plain declaration."

"What then is it to believe with the heart?"

This I illustrated by telling him that if his wife were in New York, and a man of established reputation should come from that city and inform him that she lay at the point of death, he would be immediately convinced of the truth of the message, while his heart would wish that it was not so ; but if a subsequent messenger should arrive and inform him that his wife had passed the crisis in her disease, and was out of danger, the feelings of his heart would sympathize with his intellectual convictions, or, in other words, he would believe with the heart and the understanding.

On hearing this illustration, he lay for a short time absorbed in thought, and then inquired with earnestness, "Is this all?"

I told him this was my view of the meaning of a belief of the heart, and referred him to the passage in Acts, where, on the day of Pentecost, as many as gladly received the word were baptized and added to the Church.

He replied, "If this is so, then salvation is much easier to attain than I have ever supposed."

I told him it was indeed so, and that sinners often rejected it on that account. They were looking for something mysterious and difficult, and when they were told that they had only to believe with

the heart, like the Assyrian leper, they would go away disappointed, and often displeased.

The next time I called to see him I found him much more unwell, but full of joy and peace. He seemed to believe with the heart that God had raised His son Jesus Christ from the dead, to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins. He continued to sink rapidly under his disease, and in a few weeks closed his earthly career, rejoicing in the simplicity of the Gospel of Christ.

#### A SKEPTICAL LAWYER.

This same pastor relates the following experience. A lawyer in my parish, though he did not profess himself an infidel, was skeptical in regard to the things of religion, and gave himself no concern about them. He was present, however, at a religious meeting, and witnessed the dreadful struggle of an awakened infidel, and from that time had enjoyed no quiet rest. Calling to see him, I found him walking the floor of his room, wringing his hands, and uttering loud groans, like one in all the bitterness of despair. When he saw me he exclaimed, "Oh, I am lost! I am lost!" He felt that he had sinned away the day of grace,—that when Christ had called he had not regarded, and that when "fear was coming like desolation, and destruction like a whirlwind," though he called the Saviour would not answer him.

I told him that God was merciful, and that Christ

invited sinners to come to Him, and said He would in no wise cast them out.

"Yes," was his reply, "His invitations have been sounding in my ears all my life, but I have hated instruction, and my heart has despised reproof; and now I have nothing but a fearful looking-for of judgment and fiery indignation from the presence of the Lord."

"You do injustice to the tender mercy and loving kindness of your Redeemer. He tells you that though your sins be as scarlet, His blood can make them white as snow. He says, 'Come unto me *all* ye who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.'

"I feel that this is what aggravates my guilt and makes my case so hopeless," he replied; "Jesus, after dying for my sins, has been all my life long waiting to be gracious, and I have been grieving His Holy Spirit and indulging in skepticism."

"But you must not add to all your other sins that of resisting God's Spirit *now*, when He is convincing you of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. God is yet waiting to be gracious, and you ought to adore the riches of that grace, which, when you have sinned so long, and against so much light, can yet strive with you by His Holy Spirit to bring you to the Saviour."

"Do you think the Spirit is yet striving with me, and that there is yet hope for my guilty soul?"

"Certainly. If the Spirit had been withdrawn from you, and God had given you up, you would have remained stupid. If you perish it will be because you will not *now* come to Christ that you may have life. The Holy Ghost says, 'To-day if you will hear His voice, harden not your heart.'"

"Do you suppose that that text is suited to my case, and that I may consider it as addressed to me?"

"It is addressed to all impenitent sinners who live under the light of the Gospel, and to you among the rest. It is my privilege and duty, as a minister of Christ, to offer you pardon and eternal life, upon the terms of the Gospel. As though God did beseech you by me, I pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

He became more composed, and seemed deeply interested in the offer of mercy, but was exceedingly oppressed by a sense of his guilt. After praying with him, and making such further suggestions to him as I thought his case required, I left him, feeling that he was not far from the kingdom. In the course of the afternoon he indulged a hope in Christ, and became as happy as he had been miserable.

#### A SWEARER CURED.

During the progress of revival meetings in a southern city, conducted by the writer, a prominent citizen arose in an inquiry meeting, and, addressing the leader, said, "I've been to these services for

three or four evenings, and about all I've heard is that if a man believes in Jesus Christ he is a Christian : now, sir, can a man swear and be a Christian ? ”

It was necessary to be brief and to avoid discussion in the presence of many young inquirers, so I replied, “ Peter swore and he was a Christian.”

“ True,” replied the gentleman, “ but that is the only time we know of Peter swearing, and I've been doing it all my life, and I've believed ever since I was a child. What would you do if you were in my place ? ”

“ If I believed in Christ, and was bound by the habit of profanity,” I replied, “ I would ask Him to give me the victory over my sin, and I would persist in asking until I'd get the answer.”

The gentleman sat down. At the close of the meeting he sought an interview. I allowed him to talk without interrupting him for some time, and then said, “ Captain, do you honestly believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God ? ”

“ I do,” was his emphatic reply.

“ Do you really desire to quit swearing ? ”

“ I surely do.”

“ Do you believe God hears and answers prayer ? ”

“ I do.”

“ Let us kneel down and ask Him to give you the victory.”

We prayed ; and as we rose from our knees, he said, with considerable animation, “ I have tried over and over again, and am just about discouraged. One thing is sure : I will never join the church till I quit

swearing." I approved of his determination with reference to church affiliation, but said, "We have asked God to give you the victory over your bad habit; do you believe He will answer our prayer?"

"Well, I could believe it if I had not been so long under its power, and had more favorable environment."

"But 'He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,'" were the words I now quoted, and said, "That ought to include your case. If you believe in Him you can trust Him to answer this prayer, and to 'supply all your need according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.'"

"I'll trust Him," was the reply; and thanking me for my patience with him, he bade me good-night.

A letter from one of the pastors in that city, written to me a few weeks subsequently, informed me of the captain's connection with his church. I at once sent my congratulations, and received a characteristic business letter, in which he said, "The Lord did answer our prayer. He has taken away the swearing habit, and put a new song in my mouth."

#### THE GREAT FOUNTAIN.

An aged gentleman was on a visit to one of the noted American watering places. Whilst taking a draught of water one morning at the spring, a lady came up to take her usual glass at the same time. The gentleman, turning towards her in a pleasant

yet thoughtful manner, asked, "Have you ever drunk at that Great Fountain?"

The lady colored and looked surprised, but turned away without a word of reply.

In the following winter the gentleman was in Rochester, when he was invited to attend a meeting for religious conference and prayer. At the close of the meeting he was asked to visit a lady who was dying. As he entered the sick room the lady fixed her eyes very intently upon the gentleman, and said, with a smile, "Do you not know me?"

"No; are we not strangers to each other?" was the reply.

"Do you not recollect asking a woman at the spring last year, 'Have you ever drunk at that Great Fountain'?"

"Yes," said the gentleman, "I do remember."

"Well, sir, I am that person. I thought at the time you were very rude, but your words kept ringing in my ears. They followed me to my chamber, to my pillow. I was without peace or rest till I found Christ. I now expect shortly to die, and you, under God, were instrumentally the means of my salvation. Be as faithful to others as you have been to me. Never be afraid to talk to strangers on the subject of religion."

What a blessing was granted on this short but faithful word! Little do Christians know how God may own His truth. Let us faithfully scatter the precious seed, and He will give the increase.

## OPPORTUNITIES.

“ Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh the harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, that they are white already unto harvest.”

“ The busy world shoves angrily aside  
The man who stands with arms akimbo set,  
Until occasion tell him what to do;  
And he who waits to have his task marked out  
Shall die and leave his errand unfulfilled.”

“ So then, as we have opportunity, let us work that which is good toward all men, and especially toward them that are of the household of faith.”

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|-------------------|-----------------|
| Ps. xxxii. 6.     | I. Cor. xvi. 9. |
| Eccl. ix. 10.     | Prov. x. 5.     |
| Matt. ix. 37, 38. | Jer. viii. 20.  |
| Mark iv. 29.      | Matt. xx. 1-6.  |
| John iv. 35.      | Luke xiii. 7.   |
| John v. 1-9       | John xii. 33.   |
| Eph. v. 16.       |                 |

## VIII.—OPPORTUNITIES.

Opportunities for personal work are as abundant as are people. They are everywhere. They hardly need be made ; they present themselves.

The official organ of one of the fraternal benefit societies says, in pleading for greater activity among its members : “To bring in one other member each year involves no Herculean labor. It involves no expense, no neglect of one’s business, nor even a sacrifice of one’s leisure moments. It merely requires the exercise on some friend of the persuasive force that nearly every man has if he will trouble himself to use it.”

The difficulty is not in failure of opportunity, but in failure to take advantage of and follow up opportunity. *Put importunity alongside of opportunity, and the world will be evangelized in this generation.*

It is a common mistake to presume that personal religious work must find its opportunity alone among the unconverted or non-professing Christians. On the contrary, most favorable conditions for such effort are found among our fellow-Christians. Personal work with each other is not merely desirable ; it is necessary, if the interests of the Church militant are to be promoted and her members are to glorify God in their bodies. And if a man can find

no favorable opportunity with his fellow-man *he can do personal work with himself*, and is without excuse for neglecting it.

Opportunities may be found then : (1) with Christians ; (2) with non-Christians ; and (3) with ourselves.

#### I. PERSONAL WORK WITH CHRISTIANS.

Here is a field which will admit of largest cultivation and produce most gratifying results. The old rule for fostering religion cannot be improved on : “And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be upon thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way.”

Obedience to this old injunction will solve the social problem of the Church and transform the life of the world. It will make undesirable and even ridiculous the employment of “amateur theatricals” and the tinsel of the stage in an attempt to hold together and interest the young people of the Church. The prevalent cry for recreation is a snare of the devil, and puts in peril the Christian man or woman who gives heed to it. It has already drawn the Christian father from the bosom of his family to the game and gossip room of the club ; it has taken the Christian mother from the hearthstone to the matinee of questionable performance, and to the whist and dancing party conducted for the benefit (?) of charitable organizations ; it is putting young men

and young women into college to train for athletic sports and to become adepts in the practices of "swell society." Yielding to this constantly increasing desire for recreation, society is polished and turned loose upon the world with little, if any, consideration for others save as they may minister to its selfish interest. The ambition of social life is coming more and more to be self-centered, its motto being, "Eat, drink, and be merry."

How different, how grand, how noble would life be if it were fed and nurtured according to the principles of the kingdom of God! Matthew Henry says, in his comment on the words we quoted above from Deuteronomy: "Thou shalt talk of these things with due reverence and seriousness for the benefit not only of thy children, but of thy other domestics, thy friends and companions, as thou sittest in thy house, either at work, or at meat, or at rest, or to receive visits; and when thou walkest by the way, either for diversion, or for conversation, or in journeys; when at night thou art retiring from thy family to lie down for sleep, and when in the morning thou art risen up and returnest to thy family again. Take all occasions to discourse with those about thee of divine things; not of unrevealed mysteries or matters of doubtful disputation, but of the plain truths and laws of God and the things that belong to our peace. So far is it from being reckoned a diminution to the honor of sacred things to make them the subject of our familiar discourse, that they

are recommended to us to be talked of ; for the more conversant we are with them the more we shall admire them and be affected with them, and may thereby be instrumental to communicate divine light and heat."

Why should not children of the King find delight in talking about the things of the kingdom and the great blessings conferred upon all whose citizenship is in heaven ? The language of every Christian should be : " Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what He hath done for my soul." The need of personal work among Christians, one with another, is well expressed by Paul in his letter to the Hebrews : " But exhort one another day by day, so long as it is called to-day, lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin." And the encouragement for personal work is found in the words of Malachi : " Then they that feared the Lord spake one with another : and the Lord hearkened and heard, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon His name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in the day that I do make even a peculiar treasure ; and I will spare them, as as man spareth his own son that serveth him."

## II. OPPORTUNITIES FOR PERSONAL WORK WITH NON-CHRISTIANS.

Even among this class, opportunities are readily found. The world is hungry for the old story of the

Cross. Non-Christians are often more willing to discuss religious questions than are Christians themselves. It is the rarest exception for one to be repulsed who discreetly approaches another on this subject. Such is the testimony of a number of prominent personal workers. In the writer's experience, which has been somewhat extended, and among all classes of men, my endeavor to interest persons in religious conversation has been, with two or three exceptions, gratefully appreciated. I have often said, and I believe it almost universally true, that men have a spot in the heart which is easily found, and readily responds to the appeal of the Gospel. In fact, there is in most persons real genuine solicitude for their own spiritual welfare, and such persons frequently surprise the personal worker with their readiness and eagerness to engage in religious conversation.

Opportunity? There it is in your home: your son, your daughter, your brother, your sister, your husband, your wife, your servant.

Opportunity? There it is in your place of business: your employee, your employer. The story has often been told how Sir George Williams, the founder of the Young Men's Christian Associations, was discovered praying, when a boy, by his employer, for whom he was pleading with God in the quiet of his own room.

Opportunity? There it is in the community of which you are a part. You can be the means of

great blessing to your fellow-student. The man next to you needs you. The writer was invited to address the students of one of the leading theological seminaries on personal work. During a portion of the hour devoted to "quiz," one of the students said: "Where shall we find opportunity for this sort of work, shut up as we are here? We have but little time to go out and look for them." It was only an hour before this, when waiting to be presented to the class, that one of the janitors came through the reception room, carrying a hod of coal in each hand. Accosting him, I said, "This is a fine building you have to care for." "Yes," was his reply, "and they're a fine lot of gentlemen in it." "It must make your work all the more pleasant," I said, "to have such men to work for. I trust you are a Christian." "No," came the ready reply; "I've had no one to help me in that way; you see I'm only a janitor."

Opportunities, my brother? You will find them without half trying. There goes that little street boy. He just passed you: you heard the oath, and let him go without a word of gentle rebuke. A prominent business man in Boston, a Christian,—one of the busiest of men,—stopped on his way from the train to have his shoes shined. "Business pretty good, my boy?" said the merchant. "Some days good, and some days it don't cut much of a figure," was the quick reply. "Which is your best day?" asked the merchant. "Sunday," said the

boot-black. "Then you don't get to church, I presume." "No, sir." "Would you like to go to Sunday School?" "I can't; I must attend to my customers." "Well, you can get some time to read, can't you?" "Yes, I do that nights." "Well," said the merchant, as he handed the little fellow a quarter of a dollar, "never mind the change. Here is a little book I want to have you read, and the next time I come along you can tell me how you like it." That is taking advantage of opportunity. That is personal work. If every Christian did a little of it, the world would be the better for our being in it, and we would be the better and richer for having tried to help some one along as we hurry through it. "They that be wise (that cause to understand) shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."

### III. OPPORTUNITIES FOR PERSONAL WORK WITH OURSELVES.

These opportunities are as much neglected and are as important as are those already discussed. Man is steward of a new nature when he is born of God. He is exhorted to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ;" and yet we fail to cultivate this new life. We are more concerned with making a living than making a life, as the late Governor Russell of Massachusetts suggested in an address to students upon one occasion.

Man ought not to shirk this responsibility. He is taught by the Word, and by his own experience, that a great conflict is raging between the flesh and the Spirit, and that he is therefore to "fight the good fight of faith, and follow after righteousness." He must "abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul." Solomon's proverb, "Keep thy heart above all that thou guardest," is significant of the watchfulness necessary to the spiritual welfare of every Christian. "If you would keep the apple of the eye from injury, not only as a most sensitive part of the frame and one most liable to derangement, but as the organ of the highest of all the senses, a sense for the loss of which not thousands of gold and silver could compensate, much more keep thy heart, so delicate a thing as it is, so susceptible of complete disorganization from the mere dust of an evil thought, so precious too, as being that organ of the moral nature by which you discern and apprehend divine truth." "The waste of animal life is repaired, not once for all, but continually, by food and sleep; and the spiritual life, a far more delicate thing, must perforce waste and decay under the exposure of many adverse influences to which it is subjected in the world. It too requires, therefore, continually to repair its forces." The process suggested by these remarks affords an opportunity for personal work with ourselves, which should be improved not only for our own self-culture, but in order that we may be kept in

condition to render the more acceptable service in behalf of others.

How few of us obey the injunction of the Psalmist, "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word." Or that of Paul, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." We are to "cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." "And we desire that each one of you may show the same diligence unto the fullness of hope even to the end: that ye be not sluggish, but imitators of them who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises." "Wherefore, brethren, give the more diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things ye shall never stumble: for thus shall be richly supplied unto you the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

"Son of man, help me to work out the plan of Thy salvation. Cause me to lay my stores of honey in the right place; I mean, the right place for Thee. Put it where its sweetness may refresh others, even though its investment may be a failure to myself. Fill me with fear and trembling at the solemnity of my own position. Impress me with the awfulness of being an unconscious worker for Thee. Teach me the untold possibilities of my smallest action. Tell me that the stone which I leave in the desert may be one day the center of Thy city, not because it

has changed its place, but because Thy places have come around it. Let me consecrate by prayer my most common deed ere ever it quits my hand, knowing that Thou hast a motive behind my motive. It shall be cast further than my utmost strength can throw, for it is impelled by a purpose higher than its own."

"The time for sowing seed it is wearing quickly dune,  
An' the time for winning souls will be over verra sune;  
Then let us a' be active, if a fruitfu' sheaf we'd bring  
To adorn the royal table i' the palace o' the King."

APPENDIX A.

USEFUL SCRIPTURE  
TEXTS.



## USEFUL SCRIPTURE TEXTS.

The passages of Scripture contained in the following pages were originally for the benefit of persons of certain conditions and needs. They are equally applicable to-day in the case of persons whose experiences are similar to those for whom they were first used. The application of many of them in personal work is well illustrated in Torrey's "How to Bring Men to Christ." They will be of little service, however, unless used in a prayerful spirit and with a sense of their deep signification. The truth embodied in any portion of Scripture becomes a living principle when appreciated and appropriated, and under such conditions can be used in work for the reclamation of others with well founded expectation of success. A most helpful procedure for the reader who desires to engage in personal work would be to study the verses indicated by the following references, being careful to note the context from which each is taken, and, with the use of the marginal references in the Bible, follow the line of truth taught to its ultimate conclusion.

The order as to classes of individuals is the same as that followed in the chapter on opportunities.

## CHRISTIANS.

Let us consider first, then, texts for use among ourselves as *Christians*. Here we have two classes, the spiritual and the carnal, or the normal and the backslidden Christians. The need of encouragement and incitement among our fellow-Christians of the class first mentioned suggests the use of the following :—

*An occasion for thanksgiving*: Ps. xl. 2, 3; Ps. xviii. 1-3; Ps. xvi. 11; Isa. xliii. 25, 26; John xiv. 1-4; John xvii. 24-26; Eph. i. 3-14; Phil. iv. 7-9; I. John i. 7; I. John iii. 1-3.

*An occasion for concern*: I. Cor. xi. 27-30; I. Tim. v. 6; I. Peter ii. 11.

“Come unto me;” “Take my yoke upon you;” “Learn of me;” “Go preach the Gospel to every creature.”

## BACKSLIDERS.

To backslide is “to turn gradually from the faith and practise of religion.” We probably include in this class a good many persons who have never experienced the joy of salvation, and who cannot, therefore, cry for its restoration. It is fair to presume that many professed Christians have simply become members of a church because it was popular in the community in which they lived; or they have “joined the church” because their parents or guardian urged them to do it. A genuine backslider, a person who has gone away from God through

carelessness or wilful disobedience, becomes, like the prodigal son, sick of sin or tired of his wanderings, and is eager and glad to return to the Father's house. "Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee." God manifested the most tender solicitude for this class in the earliest history of His chosen ones, and His loving, patient heart yearns for all such now. No class of people affords a more favorable and more promising opportunity for personal effort. And in no class is there, probably, a greater need for such effort. The Church is shorn of her power and has lost the art of soul-winning because of her backsliding. There has been a gradual turning from the faith and practise of religion, until now notes of alarm are being sounded and strenuous efforts are being made to stay the current of worldliness and diabolism which threaten to undermine and destroy the Christian safeguards of civilization. Personal work, intelligently, lovingly, and persistently prosecuted among this class, will result in a revival of religion throughout the Church, commanding the wonder and admiration of the world, and inciting men to a personal acceptance and confession of Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord.

The following references indicate only a few of the texts of Scripture which will be of service if wisely used:—

Ex. xxxii. 7-14; Ezra viii. 22; Prov. xiv. 14;  
Jer. ii. 13, 19, 22; Jer. iii. 12-15, 22; Jer. iv.

1-3; Hos. xiv. 1-7; John xxi. 15-17; Heb. x. 38; Rev. ii. 4, 5.

#### THE UNCONVERTED.

##### *The Unbeliever.*

- (a) Present condition: John iii. 18; John xvi. 8, 9; Gal. iii. 10; Rom. iii. 19.
- (b) Future condition: John iii. 36; Prov. i. 24-31; Ps. v. 5; Ps. vi. 8; Ps. i. 6; Matt. xxv. 10; John viii. 21; Matt. xxv. 46; Rev. xxi. 8; I. Thess. i. 7-10.
- (c) Salvation promised: Luke xix. 10; Rom. v. 8; I. Tim. i. 15; I. Peter iii. 18; I. John iv. 9, 10.
- (d) Urged to repent: Ezek. xxxiii. 11; Isa. xlvi. 7; Mark i. 15; Acts. xvi. 30, 31; Luke v. 32.
- (e) Hope alone in Christ: Acts x. 43; John iii. 16; John xiv. 6; I. John v. 11, 12; I. Tim. ii. 5, 6; John i. 12; Gal. iv. 4, 5.

#### A STUDY FOR SELF-EXAMINATION.

Ps. lxxxv. 8; Ps. cxix. 18; Ps. lxvi. 18; Ps. xix. 12-14; John xv. 7, 8; I. Peter ii. 11; I. Tim. v. 22; Jude 20, 21; Ps. cxxi.; Ps. cxxiv. 8; Heb. iv. 16; Phil. iv. 19; Isa. xxvi. 3; John xv. 7; Matt. xiii. 10, 11; Matt. v. 16.

One who is familiar with the Bible can generally refer to a text which will meet the objection urged by persons who either do not desire to become Christians or who have difficulty in seeing the way clearly. Take, for example, the following:—

“I am good enough:” Gen. vi. 5; Ps. li. 5-7; Luke xviii. 19.

“I am as good as most Christians :” Rom. xiv. 10–12; II. Cor. v. 10; Rev. xx. 11, 12, 15.

“I have never done anything really bad :” Luke xvi. 15; James ii. 10.

“I cannot give up my pleasures :” Eccles. ii. 1; Eccles. xi. 9; Ps. xvi. 11.

“I know I shall fail :” John vi. 37; II. Tim. i. 12; II. Tim. iv. 18.

“I cannot now, but will some time :” Luke xiv. 17; Acts xxiv. 25; James iv. 13, 14; Luke xii. 19, 20.

“I am too great a sinner :” Luke v. 32; Luke xix. 10; I. Tim. i. 15.

“My day of grace has passed :” Ex. xxxiv. 5–7; II. Chron. xxx. 9; Isa. lv. 7.

“I do not feel concerned :” Rom. xiii. 11; Eph. v. 14; Heb. ii. 3.

“I cannot know that these things are true :” Acts xvii. 11; John v. 39; John vii. 17.

“It will cost me my living :” Matt. vi. 33; Ps. lxxxiv. 11; Rom. xiv. 7.

“It will prevent my becoming rich :” I. Tim. vi. 9, 10; Mark viii. 36, 37; Rev. iii. 17, 18.

“I cannot hold my friends :” Matt. x. 37; Matt. xxii. 37; Phil. iii. 8.

“How may I know that Christ is the Son of God ?” John xx. 30, 31; John x. 23–25; I. John v. 13, 20; Mark iv. 11.

“How may I know that the Bible is true ?” John vii. 17.

“Will God not save me if I do my best?” Eph. ii. 8, 9; Titus iii. 5–8.

“Why must a man believe in Christ to be saved?” John xiv. 6; Acts iv. 12; Gal. ii. 16; Rom. iii. 23–26.

“How may I know I am forgiven?” Ps. xxxii. 5; Prov. xxviii. 13; I. John i. 7–9.

“If I accept Christ, should I unite with the Church?” Yes; for the following reasons:

1. The organized unity of Christians in the Church is the testimony which the world needs. John xvii. 21.

2. Christ identified the Church with Himself; the Apostle calls it His own body. Membership of one implies membership of both. John xv. 5; Eph. i. 22, 23.

3. Christ puts union with the Church, profession of faith by baptism, next to faith itself as a condition of salvation. Mark xvi. 16.

4. One must unite with the Church to come into the closest unity with Christ himself. Eph. v. 30–32.

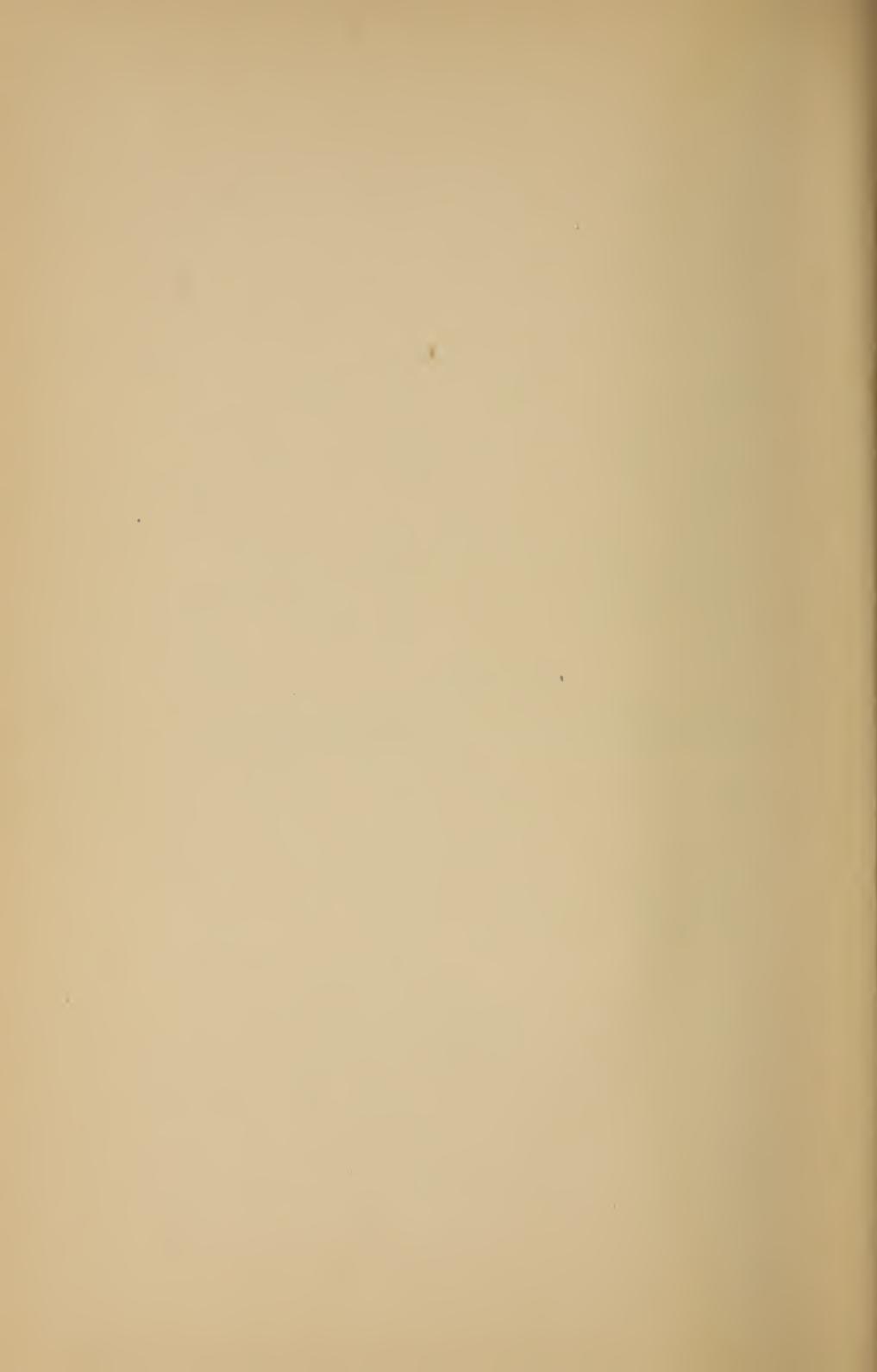
5. One must unite with the Church to be identified with the only cause which is wholly right, true, strong, and certain to outlive and prevail over all others. Matt. xvi. 18.

6. It is only by uniting with others in the living body of the Church that we can fittingly remember Christ in the way of His choice and show forth His death till He come. I. Cor. xi. 23–26.

7. To stand outside the Church is to slight what is most precious in the sight of God. Acts xx. 28.

APPENDIX B.

THE  
WORKER'S LIBRARY.



## THE WORKER'S LIBRARY.

There is a sense in which a library is never complete. New books are constantly coming out, some of which would better never have been published, but many serve a good purpose. Unless the person making the purchase is fully competent to decide on the merit of a book, advice should be sought of competent authority before placing it among other books for reference in the study of the Bible. When obtained, care should be exercised in the use to which the book is put. There is a tendency to examine the "helps" rather than to examine the Scriptures. The old Scotch woman told her minister that she was coming to like the commentary he gave her since she found the Bible throwing a heap o' light on it. Her method of using the commentary suggests a test by which the student may determine the value of such "helps."

Comparatively few books are necessary in the study of the Scriptures. The Bible is its own best commentary. Scripture compared with Scripture, as suggested by the marginal references, will add to one's knowledge, and if the investigation is pursued in reliance upon the Holy Spirit, He will enlighten the mind and increase the power of spiritual discernment in the reverent, trustful student. The object

in study determines largely the interest put into it, and the profit gotten out of it. Dr. Herrick Johnson has said, "Study the Bible to find Christ, and a glory gilds the sacred page one never dreamed of."

The books most desirable for a Worker's Library are put in a separate list and constitute the first table below.

*A good copy of the Bible.*

The revised version is preferable, especially now that it is issued with marginal references. Care should be exercised in the selection of a Bible with reference to the quality of binding and paper. The best is the cheapest.

*A Concordance.*

Young's Analytical is probably the best, though Cruden's is very good and less bulky.

*Bible Text Book.*

This is a book relating to persons, places, and subjects occurring in the Bible. The one published by the American Tract Society is as good as any.

*Bible Dictionary.*

Smith's or Schaff's.

*A good Commentary.*

There is no better comprehensive Commentary than Matthew Henry's. Jamieson Fausset and Brown's is practical and concise, and cannot be too strongly commended.

“Analogy of the Bible,” . . . . .	Butler
“Life of Christ,” . . . . .	Edersheim
“Through the Eternal Spirit,” . . . . .	Cummings
“Christian Teaching and Life,” . . . . .	Hovey
“The History of the Christian Church,” . . . . .	Fisher

The following additional books are desirable for a study of the subjects indicated by their titles:—

“Ministry of the Spirit,” . . . . .	Gordon
“The Spirit-Filled Life,” . . . . .	MacNeil
“Work of the Holy Spirit in Man,” . . . . .	Tophel
“Veni Creator,” . . . . .	Moule
“The Mission of the Comforter,” . . . . .	Hare
“Plain Papers on the Holy Spirit,” . . . . .	Scofield
“The Acts of the Holy Spirit,” . . . . .	Pierson
“Prayer as a Theory and a Fact,” . . . . .	Faunce
“The Ministry of Intercession,” . . . . .	Murray
“The Lord’s Prayer,” . . . . .	Hall
“The Divinity of our Lord,” . . . . .	Liddon
“The Christ of History,” . . . . .	Young
*“The Man Christ Jesus,” . . . . .	Speer
“The Bible, its Meaning and Supremacy,” . . . . .	Farrar
“How we got our Bible,” . . . . .	Smyth
“How God Inspired the Bible,” . . . . .	Smyth
“John,” . . . . .	Godet
“Romans,” . . . . .	Chalmers
“Galatians,” . . . . .	Luther
“Ephesians,” . . . . .	Graham

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\* Published by the International Committee of Young Men's Christian Associations.

- "The Treasury of David," . . . . . Spurgeon  
 "The Philosophy of the Plan of Salvation," Annon  
 "The Way of Life," . . . . . Hodge

\*PAMPHLETS ON PERSONAL WORK.

- "Personal Work: How Organized and Accomplished," . . . . . Mott-Ober  
 "Christ as a Personal Worker," . . . . . Messer  
 "Christ Among Men," . . . . . McConaughy  
 "Outlines for Christian Workers," . . . Mehaffey

FOR PERSONAL DEVOTIONAL READING.

- "Thoughts on Personal Religion," . . . Goulburn  
 "The Imitation of Christ," . . . Thomas a Kempis  
 "Light on Life's Duties," . . . . . Meyer  
 "Lectures to Professing Christians," . . . Finney  
 \*"Bible Study for Spiritual Growth," . . . Mott  
 \*"The Morning Watch," . . . . . Mott  
 \*"Secret Prayer," . . . . . . . Mott

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